MARVEL MASTERWORKS®

THE INCREDIBLE HULK®

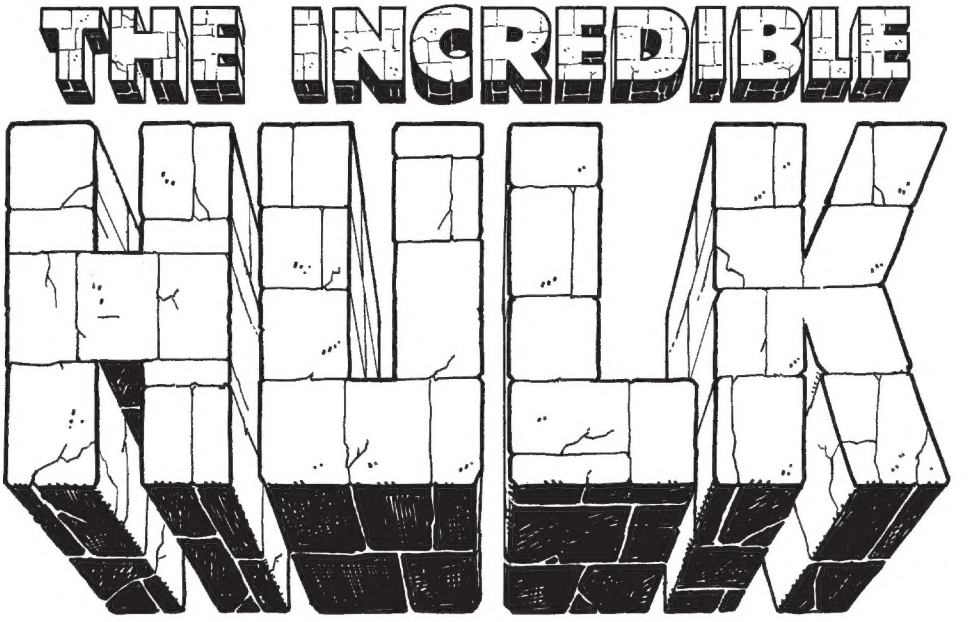
VOLUME 12

THE INCREDIBLE HULK Nos. 197-209
& ANNUAL No. 5
LEN WEIN & SAL BUSCEMA

MARVEL

MARVEL MASTERWORKS

PRESENTS



VOLUME 12

COLLECTING

THE INCREDIBLE HULK Nos. 197-209

& ANNUAL No. 5

LEN WEIN • SAL BUSCEMA

Collection Editor
Cory Sedlmeier
Book Design
Nickel DesignWorks
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Digital Production
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CREDITS

THE
INCREDIBLE HULK
NOS. 197-209 & ANNUAL NO. 5

Writers: Len Wein (Nos. 197-209, *Annual* No. 5)
Herb Trimpe (No. 204)
Chris Claremont (*Annual* No. 5)

Pencilers/Layouts: Sal Buscema (Nos. 197-203, 205-209, *Annual* No. 5)
Herb Trimpe (No. 204)

Inkers/Finishers: Joe Staton (Nos. 197-209)
Jack Abel (*Annual* No. 5)

Letterers: John Costanza (Nos. 197, 198, 201, 204-206)
Irving Watanabe (Nos. 199, 202, 203, 207, 208)
Joe Rosen (Nos. 200, 208, 209, *Annual* No. 5)

Colorist: Glynis Wein (Nos. 197-209, *Annual* No. 5)

Editor: Len Wein

Color & Art Reconstruction: Michael Kelleher & Kellustration

Special Thanks: Ted Latner, Ralph Macchio & John Rhett Thomas

HULK CREATED BY STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY

MARVEL MASTERWORKS

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INTRODUCTION
BY SAL BUSCEMA

When I was asked to write the introduction to this *Marvel Masterworks* volume, it gave me a chance to reflect on the great significance the Hulk has had in my life and career. Would you believe this is my 50th anniversary in the business of comics? And what many may not know is: It all started with the Hulk!

But first, by way of background, since I've never written an introduction for this line of books before, perhaps a bit of an introduction of myself is in order.

I was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1936. My family lived in a tenement house in a kind of an ethnic neighborhood that would probably be called a ghetto today, but that sounds worse than it really was. That's where I grew up the first 17 years of my life and where my artistic aspirations first took flight. My father was a barber and he owned his own barbershop right there in the neighborhood. He was a marvelous barber and he had a couple of men working alongside him. He was always busy and turned it into a successful business. In fact, we were probably in the upper class of the neighborhood. My mother was a homemaker and she took very good care of her family.

Barbershops were famous for having comic books as reading material to occupy the time of restless children, but my father didn't have any of those laying around. He didn't think much of comic books. As a matter of fact, when my older brother John, whom you all know from his work at Marvel, expressed an interest in drawing comic books, my father was totally against it. He did everything he could to talk him out of it. He wanted him to become a barber. "You can always earn a living as a barber! How are you ever going to earn a living as an artist?" Well, I guess as they say, the rest is history. I thank God for my mother because she recognized John's talent. And then when John became a successful comic-book guy, he finally convinced my father that he did the right thing.

But that doesn't mean we didn't have access to comic books growing up. I wasn't a comic-book fanatic, but like a lot of my friends, I enjoyed reading them. EC Comics were probably my favorite. They were so controversial and hard-edged. I also liked the super heroes back then: I enjoyed Batman and Superman and Captain America. There was a little candy store across the street from where I lived. I'd go over there and pick up a comic book whenever I had a dime to spare and take it home to read it.

Movies were a favorite pastime, too. When I was pretty small my mother would take my sister and me to a neighborhood theater and see what happened to be playing at the time. (It was usually a picture my mother wanted to see.) Back then you had a double feature and cartoons and newsreels and all that stuff. It was a completely different era. My family also enjoyed radio programs: *The Shadow* and *Inner Sanctum* and all the comedy shows. And TV started becoming popular and we eventually bought one of those. John and my brother Al, who was the oldest in the family, went out one day and bought a console TV set. It was a small nine-inch, black-and-white screen. Oh my gosh—television was science fiction coming true!

I guess there was a certain amount of hero worship when John started drawing for a living. When he was hired by Stan Lee at Timely Comics I was 12 years old—and all of a sudden I had a brother who was a comic-book artist. I was a big guy on the block! I took advantage of it, strutting around,

bragging about how my brother was a big comic-book artist. As far as being an influence, yes, John was definitely an influence on me, but I always loved to draw from the earliest age I can think of. I never stopped and John was always very encouraging to me.

It was the kind of thing where we always had a little pad of blank paper around the house and we'd pick up a pencil and we would draw. John and I both attended what was known back then as the High School of Music and Art, which is the place that was the inspiration for the movie and TV show *Fame*. That was the extent of my training, but I've always believed that, aside from the technical aspects, you can't be taught to be an artist. The only thing you can expect is guidance from a good art teacher, and I had a big advantage in that I had John to show me the way.

John proved there was no doubt in my mind that art was no lazy pursuit. He and I had many discussions over the years—something I miss greatly now that he's gone—and we always agreed that you can't draw enough. This is how you develop your craft: by constantly drawing and learning. It's a never-ending learning process. You are learning until the day they lower you into your grave.

By the time I tried to get into the comic-book business in the mid-1950s, the industry had been decimated. John had a hard time getting freelance work at the time, too. It couldn't have been worse timing for him. When I was around 16 years old I made up some art samples and went around to the few companies that were left. The top pros in the business were having trouble getting work so they weren't gonna give work to someone of my age; not to mention the fact that I wasn't good enough.

I decided not to go to college even though I had the opportunity to go to Cooper Union, but I did get a job as an apprentice in an art studio making deliveries, sweeping up, sharpening pencils—you gotta start somewhere! That was my first paying job.

I eventually got into advertising and spent 13 years in that business. I was with a couple of small outfits to begin with and then graduated to a very nice art studio that did work on top-notch accounts. I was not a layout guy. I couldn't stand laying out ads even though I often did it out of necessity. They ask you to do something like that, you gotta do it! But my forte was always illustration.

In the mid-'60s, John ran into Stan Lee one day on the streets of Manhattan, and Stan told him the comic-book industry was coming back and they could use him. John had been commuting to a job way out on Long Island, and it was killing him. He decided the heck with this and he was gonna go back into comics. When he mentioned it to me, I asked him if they had room for anyone else!

I had a very good-paying ad job in the Washington, DC, area. I was married, I had just purchased a home, we were expecting a child…but I decided that job wasn't for me. I had always wanted to do comics. I went out and bought some new comic books for reference and worked up samples of a six-page Hulk story. Comics are not easy to do and it took me a whole year to figure out how to do this. I sent them up to Stan. He said on the strength of those pages he wanted to see me. So I went to New York, talked to him, and he gave me a job. I sure wish I had those pages still. I have no idea what happened to them. At the time it didn't seem important to keep them.

Sol Brodsky was the art director at Marvel at that time, and I told him that what I really wanted to do was ink. That's my first love. I love having a brush in my hands and inking. In June 1968, I got my first job through Sol: inking a ten-page Western called "The Coming of the Gunhawk."

John made a request for me as his inker. He was such a phenomenal draftsman and he was very protective about his penciling. He wanted somebody on him that could really follow his faultless drawing. Joe Sinnott, who is one of the giants in the business, inked John's first few issues of *Silver*

Surfer, and even though Joe did a creditable job, it was Joe Sinnott coming through in the work. John talked Stan into using me and we did a few issues together—issue #4 with Thor is considered a classic today. I almost hated inking those pages because John's pencils were so gorgeous.

Once Stan saw my pencils he put me on *The Avengers*. Of all the things! It really was a struggle. I did a few issues of that and they transitioned me over to *Sub-Mariner* and then *Captain America* and *Marvel Team-Up*, which was a great relief to me. The team books are always the most difficult because you have a lot more relationships between characters to deal with. I came back to *The Avengers* and also drew 41 issues of *The Defenders*, so team books still kept me busy!

And then came the Hulk. When Stan interviewed me the first time, with those Hulk sample pages, he was talking about what he wanted from his artists depicting the stories. He wanted very exciting, very dramatic page layouts that leapt out at the reader, and the first pages he showed me were Herb Trimpe's Hulk, because Herb was a master storyteller. I think Herb would admit that he wasn't the greatest draftsman in the world, but he could tell a story that was very graphic and very legible.

It was very important to Stan to have that incorporated in everyone's work. I think it was significant that the first work I saw from Stan was Herb's. I mentioned that to him one time and he was very gratified about that. I had inked him a few times, too. Inking Herb was a blast. I love to ink anybody, but Herb was a lot of fun. He was easy to ink, too.

It turns out I was replacing Herb Trimpe on *The Incredible Hulk*. Herb was one of the nicest people in the industry. It was so sad to hear he passed away in 2015, a real heartbreaker. We had only ever spoken on the phone in the old days. The funny thing about it, several years ago I went to a convention in Baltimore—not as a guest but just to meet Ron Frenz and Tom DeFalco to take them to lunch—and come to find out that Herb was one of the guests. That was the first time that Herb and I had met in person. He was just as nice as he's always been, a true gentleman. I can't think of anybody that had a disparaging word to say about him.

When I took over drawing *The Incredible Hulk*, I had my own ideas about the character and what I wanted to do. I wanted him to be very animated, and I really tried to delve into the personality of the character. I asked myself, what happens to an individual who changes into this unbelievable creature with strength beyond anyone's imagination—where the angrier he became the stronger he became—and yet he had the mind of a six-year-old and just wanted to be left alone? There was so much drama to play with in a character like that. I tried to make the Hulk very savage at some points, and then have a more passive attitude at others.

I was just elated when they asked me to do the book. I got a call one day out of the blue. Whoever called me simply said, "Sal, Herb Trimpe is not gonna be doing *The Incredible Hulk* anymore. Would you like to do it?" I said "Absolutely!" That was the book I had always wanted to do. And I was on the book for about 10 years. But as far as I was concerned I would have done a 20-year run on *Hulk*. I would have never let the character go. Hulk was a character I felt really close to as an artist and I had the opportunity to work with some terrific writers, too.

Len Wein was a wonderful writer and I really enjoyed working with him. We had a great chemistry. He would always be late with his plots and so we'd go over them on the phone. We'd hash ideas out over the phone, and although most of them were his, every now and then I'd make a suggestion that sometimes he would use. That kind of collaboration spoiled me and so consequently I didn't make as many trips up to New York as I should have. I should have kept better contact with the people at Marvel, just to let them know that I'm still breathing and alive, if nothing else.

As far as my drawing philosophy, I didn't approach the Hulk any differently from Captain America or Spider-Man. I was always working according to the Stan Lee formula. He was always a great believer in pacing. He said you can't have 22 pages of action because then it becomes boring. You have to temper it with some quiet pages occasionally where there are people relating as human beings. I am sure that's one of the reasons that Marvel achieved the success that it did.

Beyond that, drawing the Hulk was just plain fun. This green behemoth gets angry all of a sudden and when he says "Hulk Smash!", he means just that! You had countless facial expressions you could play with. A character like Spider-Man, whose face is completely covered, is more limited in that respect.

One of the most memorable moments in my life drawing the Hulk is collected in this volume: the death of Jarella. Here we have a situation where the Hulk falls in love. Now that right there is almost a contradiction: Is someone like the Hulk really capable of falling in love? That to me was totally fascinating. And then to have this love tragically taken away from him? The whole premise was so fraught with emotion. Drawing that story was one of the two times where I actually got choked up drawing something. The other time was when I drew the death of Harry Osborn in *Spectacular Spider-Man*. I literally got choked up drawing it. The Jarella episode did the same thing. I remember thinking at the time, "Good grief, man! Get yourself together, you're losing it!" But when you get involved in your work like that it's not difficult to happen.

Longtime *Hulk* fans are aware that I very rarely drew the covers for *Hulk* despite being one of the longest-tenured artists on the book ever. Early in my career I illustrated covers for the series that were mine, but begged off of them the further in my career I went. I was quite prolific drawing interior pages, so I suppose the approval process for covers would often get in the way of my work. That was something that didn't appeal to me. Stan was a real fusspot about getting covers done to his specifications. He would ask for changes quite often. Even so, the communication I had with Stan was very amiable. I loved him, and I guess he liked me okay. I do regret not doing as many covers as perhaps I could have.

There's also the matter of Herb Trimpe returning to draw an issue of *Hulk* right in the middle of my run. I'd love to give some background for that piece of trivia but I can only deduce how that came about. Because of my speed and the fact that I did a relatively competent job even under ridiculous circumstances, Marvel was always calling on me to do additional work on other books. Reviewing my output at the time, I can see I was drawing multiple series and also a bunch of annual issues. I was a company man and I wanted to help the company out any time I could. Guys were always late with their deadlines, and editors would come to me and say, "Sal, can you help out?" And I'd say, "If I can do it, I'll do it." So maybe my schedule got overburdened helping other books out, and Herb had to come into spell me on mine.

I'm thrilled that the *Marvel Masterworks* series has begun to present the work Len and I did on *The Incredible Hulk*. It's some of my favorite work on my favorite character and it seems a perfectly "incredible" coincidence that this milestone would be reached in my 50th anniversary in the business. I hope you enjoy these stories today as much as I did drawing them those many years ago.

Sal Buscema

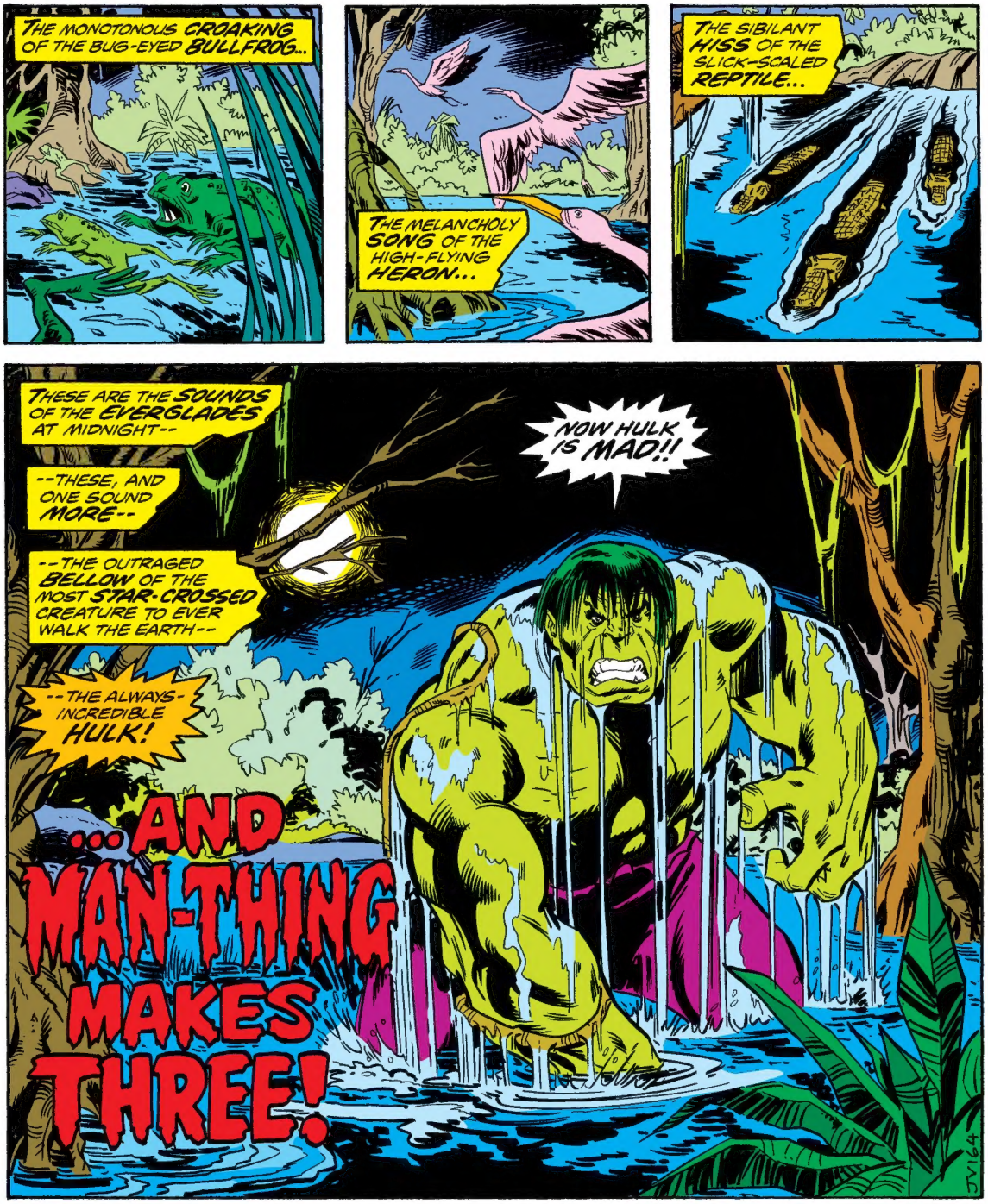
2018

INCREDIBLE HULK
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
197
MAR
02456
THE INCREDIBLE HULK
VS. MAN-THING!
STRIKE, MY SLAVE-- AT THE COMMAND OF THE COLLECTOR!
NEED WE SAY MORE?
WRIGHTSON

Caught in the heart of a *Nuclear Explosion*, victim of *Gamma-Radiation* gone wild, *Doctor Robert Bruce Banner* now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered *Fury*—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK! TM

LEN WEIN • SAL BUSCEMA & JOE STATON • GLYNIS WEIN • JOHN COSTANZA • MARV WOLFMAN
WRITER/EDITOR — ILLUSTRATORS — colorist — letterer — GAME WARDEN

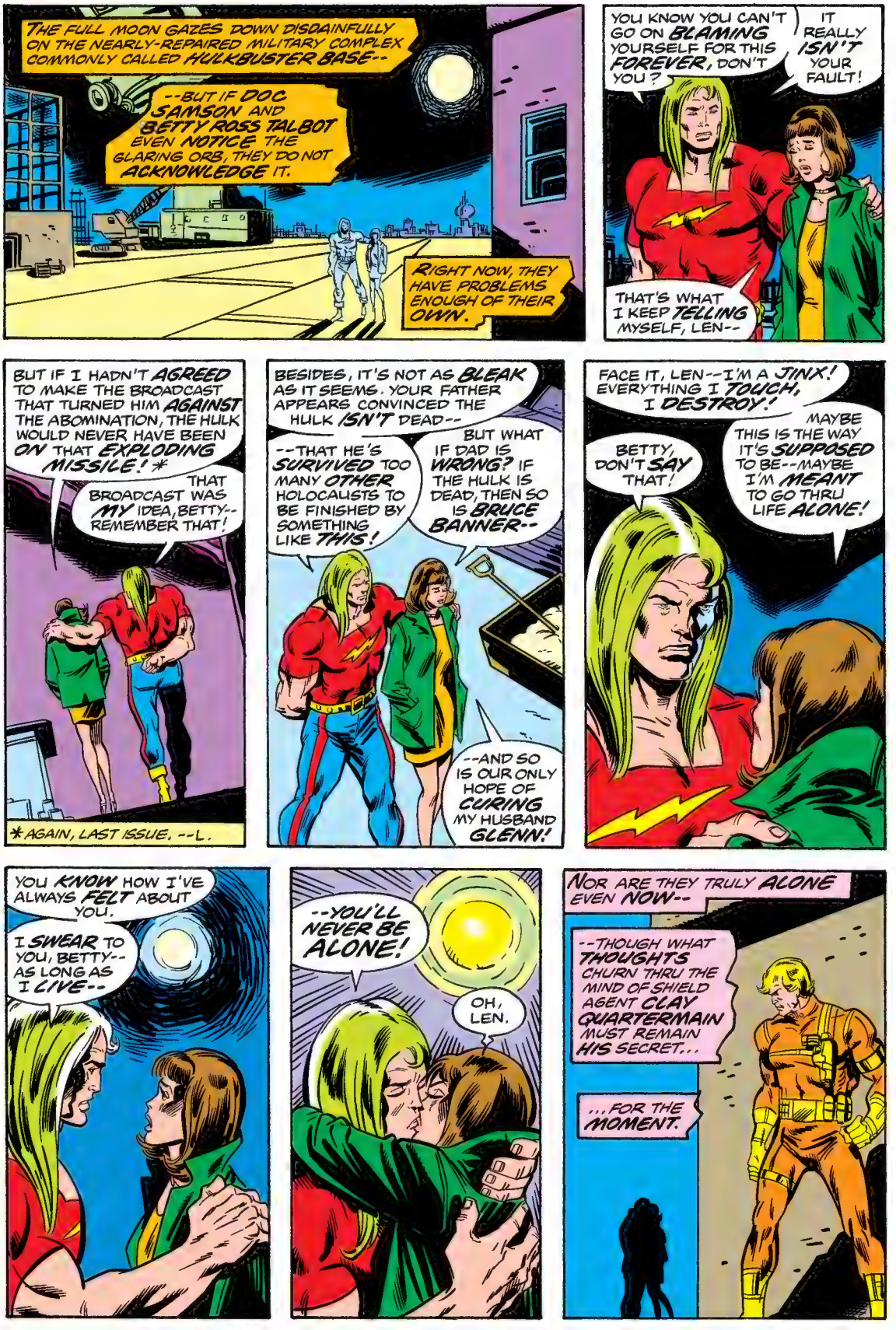

THE MONOTONOUS CROAKING OF THE BUG-EYED BULLFROG...
THE MELANCHOLY SONG OF THE HIGH-FLYING HERON...
THE SIBILANT HISS OF THE SLICK-SCALED REPTILE...
THESE ARE THE SOUNDS OF THE EVERGLADES AT MIDNIGHT--
--THESE, AND ONE SOUND MORE--
--THE OUTRAGED BELLOW OF THE MOST STAR-CROSSED CREATURE TO EVER WALK THE EARTH--
--THE ALWAYS-INCREDIBLE HULK!
NOW HULK IS MAD!!
...AND MAN-THING MAKES THREE!
JV164

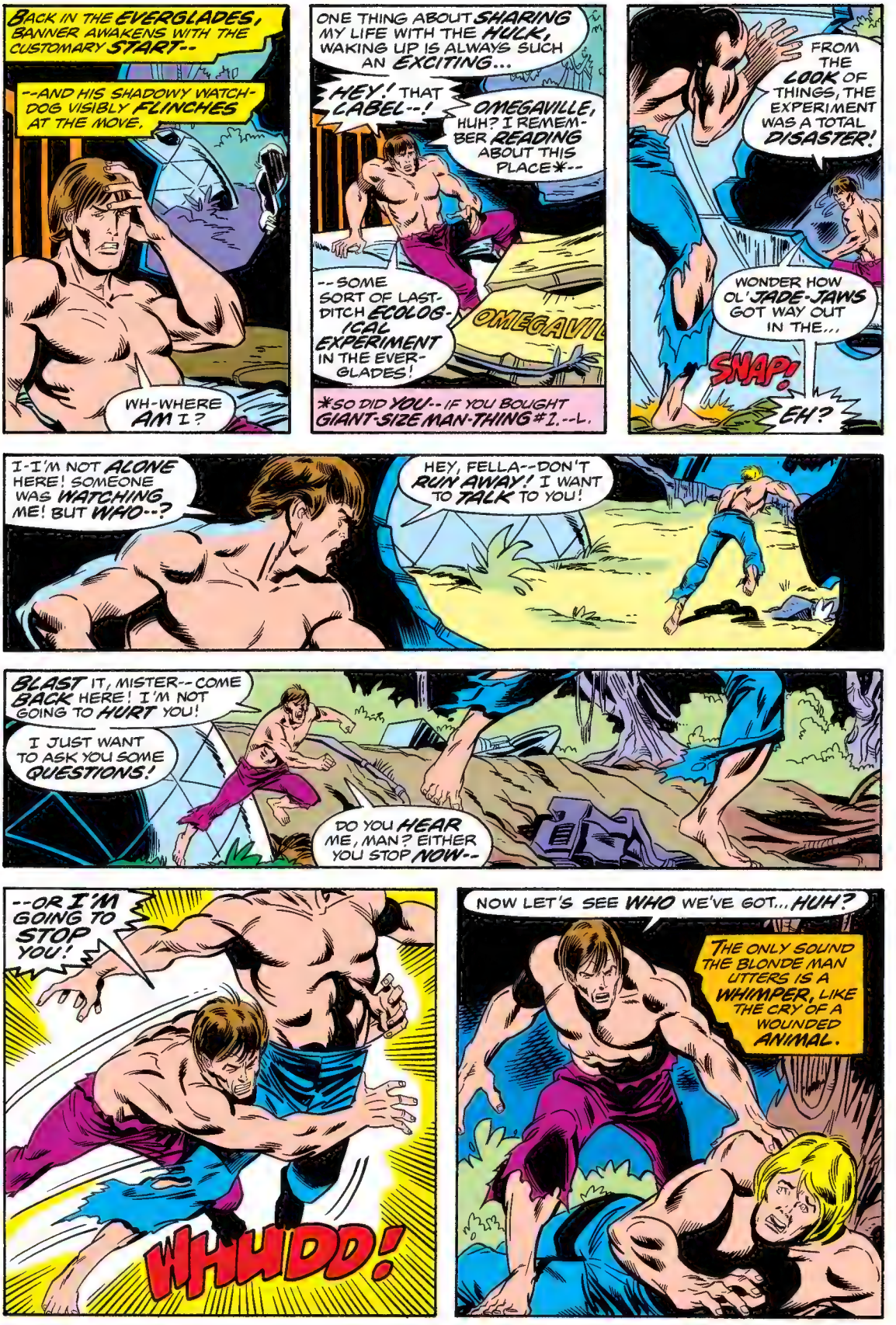
WHAT IS HULK DOING IN THIS PLACE OF MUD AND WATER?
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE ONE HULK WAS FIGHTING?
HULK DOES NOT KNOW. HULK NEVER KNOWS.
ALL HULK KNOWS IS THAT ABOMINATION IS GONE*--AND HULK IS GLAD.
MAYBE NOW HULK CAN FIND A PLACE TO BE ALONE!
*BLOWN TO KINGDOM COME LAST ISSUE, RIGHT? --LEN
HULK IS TIRED OF THOSE WHO PRETEND TO BE HULK'S FRIENDS, THEN...
HUH?
SOMETHING BEHIND HULK--!?!
BAH! IT IS ONLY LIZARDS!
HULK DOES NOT WANT YOU!
GO AWAY, LIZARDS-- STOP FOLLOWING HULK!
PERHAPS NOT, HULK--BUT THEY DEFINITELY WANT YOU!
YOU'VE JUST BEEN INVITED TO DINNER--
--AS THE MAIN COURSE!
SO--NOW EVEN PUNY ANIMALS ATTACK HULK!
HULK ALWAYS LIKED ANIMALS--
--BUT NOT ANY MORE!!
THRASHH!

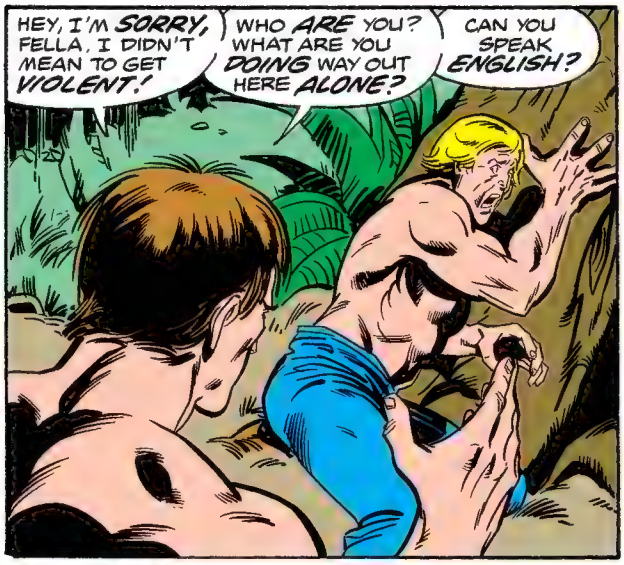
THE SOUND OF THE SAVAGE STRUGGLE BRINGS THE WATCHERS TO THE WATER'S EDGE: MOST LURED BY PRIMITIVE CURIOSITY--
--BUT ONE DRAWN NEAR BY HIS BIZARRE EMPATHIC NATURE.
IN ANOTHER LIFE, HE HAD BEEN TED SALLIS, DEDICATED SCIENTIST--
--BUT NOW HE IS ONLY--A MAN-THING!
ABOVE THE BATTLE, STILL ANOTHER SPECTATOR LOLLS LAZILY AMONGST THE MOSS-DRAPED BRANCHES--
--ITS SLITTED EYES CASUALLY STUDYING THE CONFLICT RAGING BELOW--
--BIDING ITS TIME, WAITING WITH CHARACTERISTIC PATIENCE--
--UNTIL THE MOMENT COMES TO--STRIKE!
HUH?
NOW SNAKE ATTACKS HULK TOO--TRIES TO STRANGLE HULK--!
BUT HULK WILL...
ABRUPTLY, AN EMERALD FOOT SLIPS ON THE SLIMY BOTTOM MUD--
--AND THE REST OF THE JADE GIANT'S WORDS ARE LOST BENEATH THE BRACKISH WATERS--
--ALONG WITH THE JADE-HUED GIANT HIMSELF!
FOR SEVERAL SECONDS, THE MAN-THING'S UNBLINKING CRIMSON EYES GAZE AT THE CHURNING, BUBBLING MIRE--THEN HE SHAMBLES FORWARD.
FOR, ALTHOUGH HE CANNOT THINK AS SUCH, THE MURK-DWELLER SOMEHOW SENSES THAT THIS STRANGE NEWCOMER TO THE SWAMP MAY NEED HIS HELP--
--OR DIE!

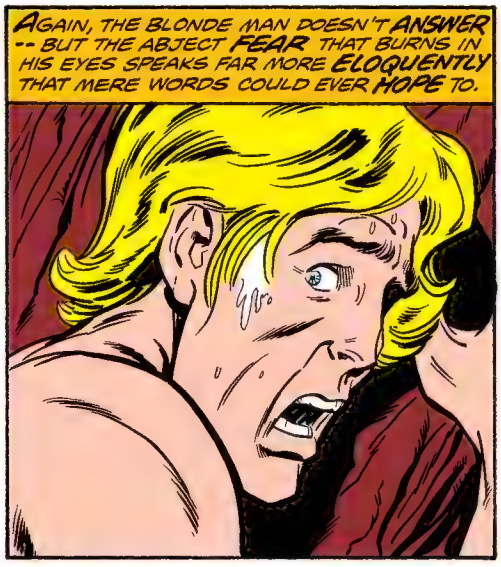
BUT FOR ONCE, IT SEEMS THE MAN-THING'S INCREDIBLE INSTINCTS HAVE FAILED HIM--
--FOR AN AWESOMELY POWERFUL GREEN FIGURE SUDDENLY ERUPTS FROM THE MURKY MORASS--
--ALONE!
HAH! HULK CAN BREATHE AGAIN!
LIZARDS TRIED TO KEEP HULK UNDER WATER--TRIED TO DROWN HULK!
LIZARDS THOUGHT THEY COULD BEAT HULK THAT WAY--
--BUT LIZARDS WERE WRONG!!
TO BEAT HULK, YOU MUST BE STRONGER THAN HULK--
--AND NO ONE IS STRONGER THAN HULK!
HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!
THERE! NEXT TIME PUNY LIZARDS WILL THINK BEFORE THEY BOTHER HULK!
HULK SAID HULK WANTED TO BE LEFT ALONE--
--AND HULK MEANT IT!
WITH A DISPASSIONATE EYE, THE SLIMY SWAMP-BEAST WATCHES THE GREEN GOLIATH LUMBER OFF IN TRIUMPH--
--THEN THE MAN-THING TURNS, AND LIKEWISE SHAMBLES AWAY--
--IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION.

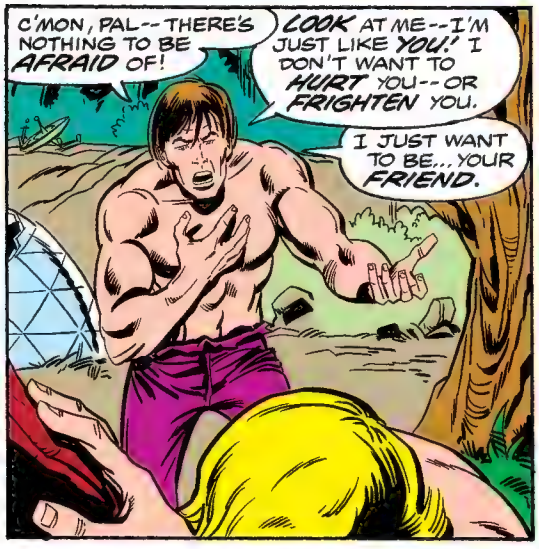
THE COOL NIGHT BREEZE HAS FINALLY DRIED THE DRIPPING MAN-BRUTE WHEN AT LAST HE STUMBLES UPON THE GEODESIC RUINS.
AT FIRST, HE IS TEMPTED TO CONTINUE ON PAST THE SHATTERED DOMES--
--BUT, AS EVER, HIS CHILD-LIKE CURIOSITY GETS THE BEST OF HIM, AND HE TRUDGES CLOSER--
?
--AN ACT HE QUICKLY REGRETS!
HUH?
SKELETON OF PUNY HUMAN--?!?
BONES KNEEL LIKE THEY ARE BEGGING--
--BEGGING FOR WHAT?
HULK DOES NOT LIKE DEAD BONES. THEY MAKE HULK FEEL COLD.
HULK WILL LEAVE THIS STRANGE PLACE BEFORE...
OH.
A BED.
IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE HULK LAST SLEPT ON A BED.
TYPICALLY, THE GREEN GOLIATH HAS ALREADY FORGOTTEN HIS MOMENTARY FEARS.
THUS, MINUTES LATER, THE GLADE IS FILLED WITH THE UNUSUAL SOUND OF FEARSOME SNORING--
--A SOUND THAT SLOWLY, INEVITABLY, GROWS SOFTER--
--EVEN AS THE SLEEPER DOES.
DOCTOR ROBERT BRUCE BANNER SLEEPS THE SLEEP OF THE DESERVEDLY EXHAUSTED--
--UNAWARE THAT HE IS NOT AT ALL ALONE IN HIS SWAMPY SANCTUARY!

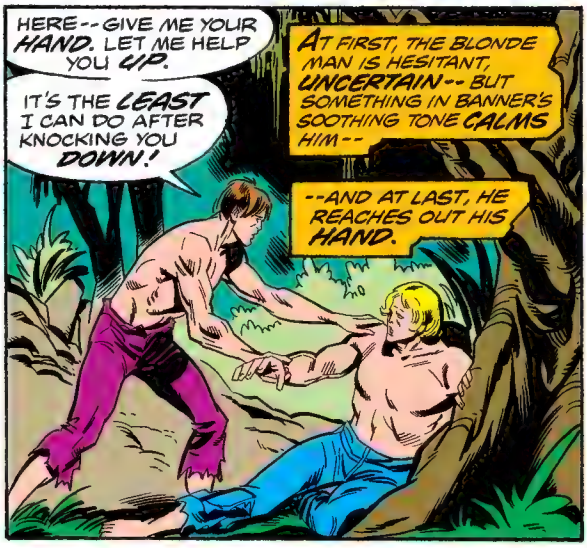

THE FULL MOON GAZES DOWN DISDAINFULLY ON THE NEARLY-REPAIRED MILITARY COMPLEX COMMONLY CALLED HULKBUSTER BASE--
--BUT IF DOC SAMSON AND BETTY ROSS TALBOT EVEN NOTICE THE GLARING ORB, THEY DO NOT ACKNOWLEDGE IT.
RIGHT NOW, THEY HAVE PROBLEMS ENOUGH OF THEIR OWN.
YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T GO ON BLAMING YOURSELF FOR THIS FOREVER, DON'T YOU?
IT REALLY ISN'T YOUR FAULT!
THAT'S WHAT I KEEP TELLING MYSELF, LEN--
BUT IF I HADN'T AGREED TO MAKE THE BROADCAST THAT TURNED HIM AGAINST THE ABOMINATION, THE HULK WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN ON THAT EXPLODING MISSILE! *
THAT BROADCAST WAS MY IDEA, BETTY--REMEMBER THAT!
* AGAIN, LAST ISSUE, --L.
BESIDES, IT'S NOT AS BLEAK AS IT SEEMS. YOUR FATHER APPEARS CONVINCED THE HULK ISN'T DEAD--
--THAT HE'S SURVIVED TOO MANY OTHER HOLOCAUSTS TO BE FINISHED BY SOMETHING LIKE THIS!
BUT WHAT IF DAD IS WRONG? IF THE HULK IS DEAD, THEN SO IS BRUCE BANNER--
--AND SO IS OUR ONLY HOPE OF CURING MY HUSBAND GLENN!
FACE IT, LEN--I'M A JINX! EVERYTHING I TOUCH, I DESTROY!
BETTY, DON'T SAY THAT!
MAYBE THIS IS THE WAY IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE--MAYBE I'M MEANT TO GO THRU LIFE ALONE!
YOU KNOW HOW I'VE ALWAYS FELT ABOUT YOU.
I SWEAR TO YOU, BETTY--AS LONG AS I LIVE--
--YOU'LL NEVER BE ALONE!
OH, LEN.
NOR ARE THEY TRULY ALONE EVEN NOW--
--THOUGH WHAT THOUGHTS CHURN THRU THE MIND OF SHIELD AGENT CLAY QUARTERMAIN MUST REMAIN HIS SECRET...
...FOR THE MOMENT.


BACK IN THE EVERGLADES, BANNER AWAKENS WITH THE CUSTOMARY START--
--AND HIS SHADOWY WATCH-DOG VISIBLY FLINCHES AT THE MOVE.
WH-WHERE AM I?
ONE THING ABOUT SHARING MY LIFE WITH THE HULK, WAKING UP IS ALWAYS SUCH AN EXCITING...
HEY! THAT CABEL--!
OMEGAVILLE, HUH? I REMEMBER READING ABOUT THIS PLACE*--
--SOME SORT OF LAST-DITCH ECOLOGICAL EXPERIMENT IN THE EVERGLADES!
*SO DID YOU--IF YOU BOUGHT GIANT-SIZE MAN-THING #1.--L.
FROM THE LOOK OF THINGS, THE EXPERIMENT WAS A TOTAL DISASTER!
WONDER HOW OL' JADE-JAWS GOT WAY OUT IN THE...
SNAP!
EH?
I-I'M NOT ALONE HERE! SOMEONE WAS WATCHING ME! BUT WHO--?
HEY, FELLA--DON'T RUN AWAY! I WANT TO TALK TO YOU!
BLAST IT, MISTER--COME BACK HERE! I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU!
I JUST WANT TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS!
DO YOU HEAR ME, MAN? EITHER YOU STOP NOW--
--OR I'M GOING TO STOP YOU!
WHUDD!
NOW LET'S SEE WHO WE'VE GOT... HUH?
THE ONLY SOUND THE BLONDE MAN UTTERS IS A WHIMPER, LIKE THE CRY OF A WOUNDED ANIMAL.


HEY, I'M SORRY, FELLA. I DIDN'T MEAN TO GET VIOLENT!
WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING WAY OUT HERE ALONE?
CAN YOU SPEAK ENGLISH?

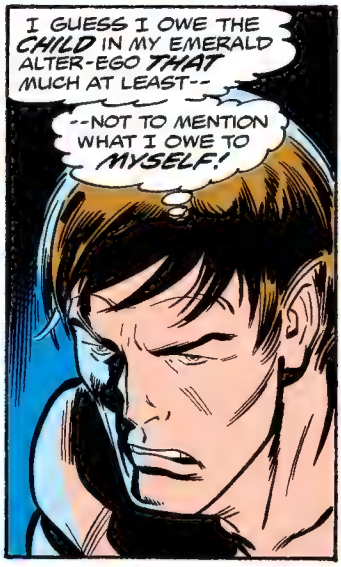

AGAIN, THE BLONDE MAN DOESN'T ANSWER -- BUT THE ABJECT FEAR THAT BURNS IN HIS EYES SPEAKS FAR MORE ELOQUENTLY THAT MERE WORDS COULD EVER HOPE TO.


C'MON, PAL-- THERE'S NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF!
LOOK AT ME--I'M JUST LIKE YOU! I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU-- OR FRIGHTEN YOU.
I JUST WANT TO BE... YOUR FRIEND.

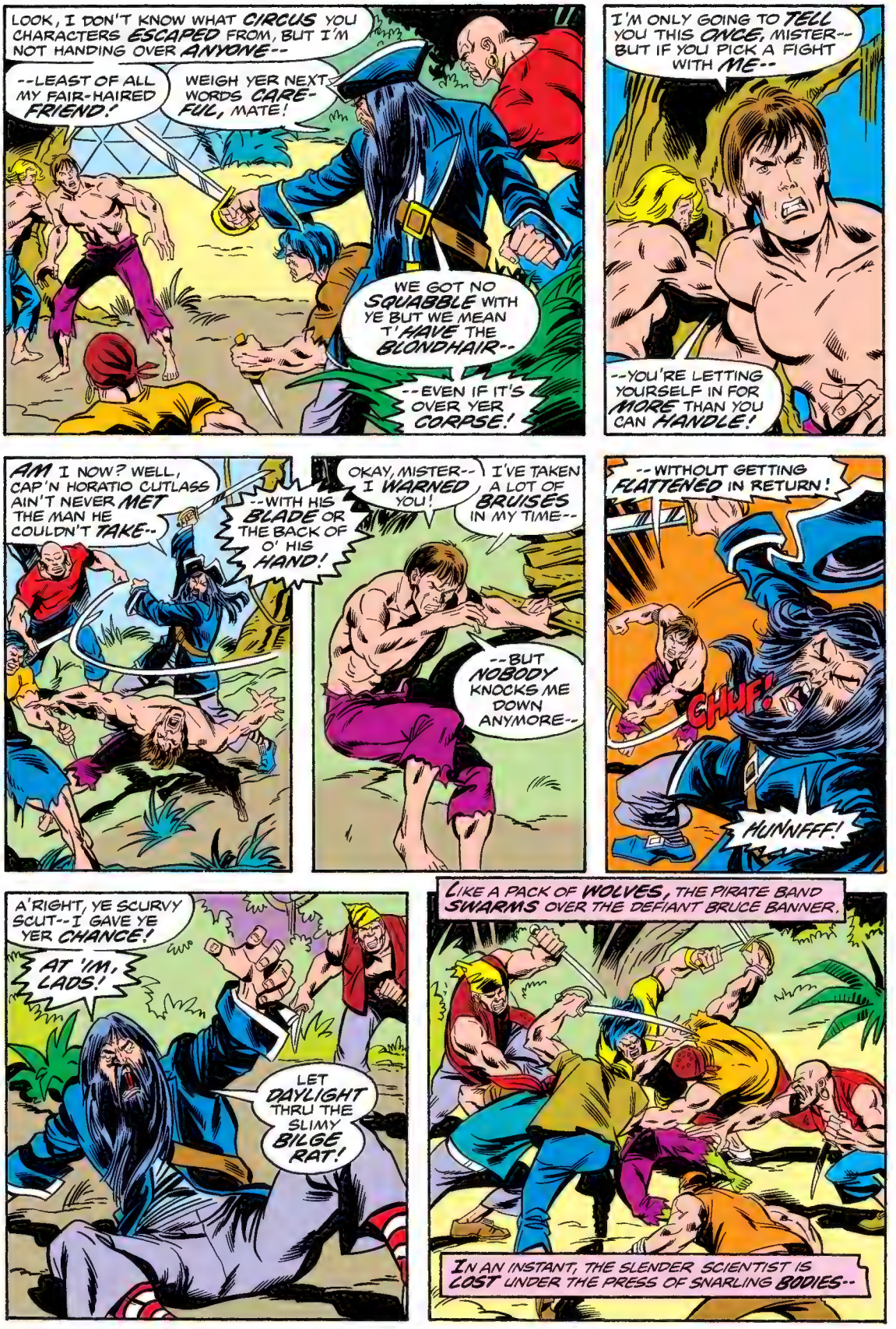

HERE-- GIVE ME YOUR HAND. LET ME HELP YOU UP.
IT'S THE LEAST I CAN DO AFTER KNOCKING YOU DOWN!
AT FIRST, THE BLONDE MAN IS HESITANT, UNCERTAIN-- BUT SOMETHING IN BANNER'S SOOTHING TONE CALMS HIM--
--AND AT LAST, HE REACHES OUT HIS HAND.

THAT'S THE WAY, BUDDY. NOW C'MON-- LET'S GO BACK TO OMEGAVILLE. YOU AND I HAVE A LOT TO TALK OVER.
POOR GUY-- MUST BE AN ESCAPEE FROM AN ASYLUM SOMEWHERE.
HE DOESN'T STAND A CHANCE OF SURVIVING OUT HERE BY HIMSELF--!

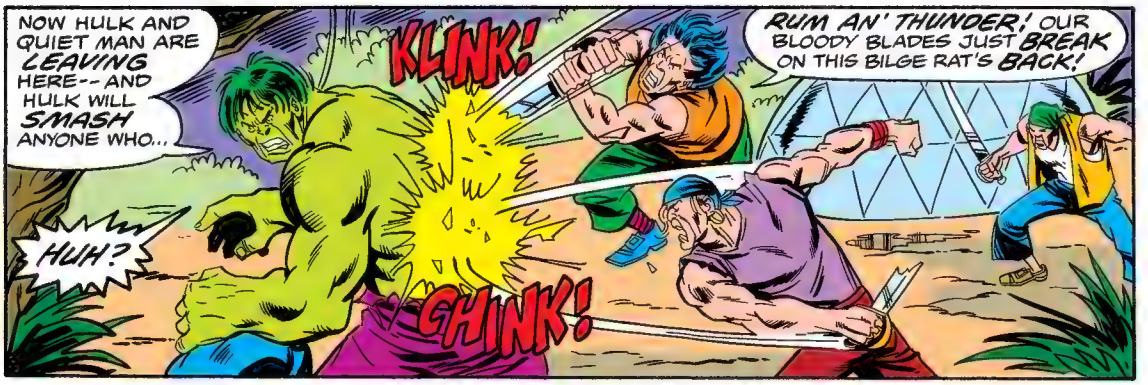
THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT HIM--A KIND OF MINDLESS INNOCENCE-- THAT REMINDS ME OF THE HULK!
I JUST CAN'T ABANDON HIM.

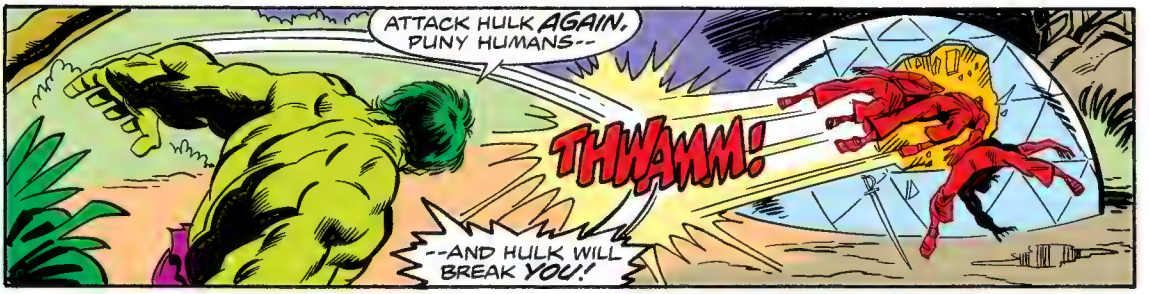

I GUESS I OWE THE CHILD IN MY EMERALD ALTER-EGO THAT MUCH AT LEAST--
--NOT TO MENTION WHAT I OWE TO MYSELF!

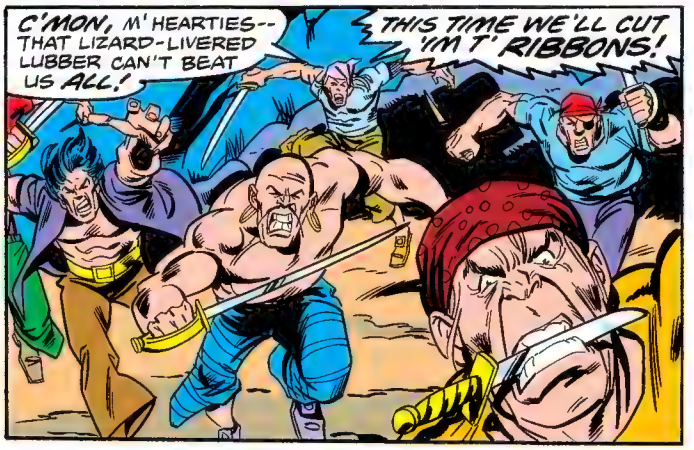
PREDICTABLY, BANNER'S NEW-FOUND COMPANION GROWS NO MORE TALKATIVE AS THE HOURS PASS...
IT'S OBVIOUS MY SILENT FRIEND UNDER-STANDS ENGLISH--
--BUT I STILL HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET A WORD OUT OF HIM.
HE JUST KEEPS LOOKING BACK OVER HIS SHOULDER AS IF THE DEVIL HIM-SELF WAS HOT ON HIS... HUH?
HEY--WHAT'S THE MATTER, BUDDY?
SOMETHING SPOOK YOU?
EASY, PAL--THERE'S NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF!
THERE--DO YOU SEE? IT WAS ONLY A LITTLE LIZARD, THAT'S ALL.
YOU'RE GETTING JUMPY FOR NO REASON.
LOOK, I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU THINK IS AFTER YOU--BUT YOU'VE GOT TO STOP WORRYING!
THERE'S NOBODY OUT HERE BUT ME AND...
THERE BE OUR PRIZE, ME BUCKOS!
TAKE 'IM!!
SWEET MOTHER OF MERCY!
AVAST, YE LUBBER! HAND OVER OL' BLONDIE--
--OR, BY GINGER--WE'LL SCUTTLE YE!


LOOK, I DON'T KNOW WHAT CIRCUS YOU CHARACTERS ESCAPED FROM, BUT I'M NOT HANDING OVER ANYONE--
--LEAST OF ALL MY FAIR-HAIRED FRIEND!
WEIGH YER NEXT WORDS CAREFUL, MATE!
WE GOT NO SQUABBLE WITH YE BUT WE MEAN T'HAVE THE BLONDHAIR--
--EVEN IF IT'S OVER YER CORPSE!
I'M ONLY GOING TO TELL YOU THIS ONCE, MISTER-- BUT IF YOU PICK A FIGHT WITH ME--
--YOU'RE LETTING YOURSELF IN FOR MORE THAN YOU CAN HANDLE!
AM I NOW? WELL, CAP'N HORATIO CUTLASS AIN'T NEVER MET THE MAN HE COULDN'T TAKE--
--WITH HIS BLADE OR THE BACK OF O' HIS HAND!
OKAY, MISTER-- I WARNED YOU!
I'VE TAKEN A LOT OF BRUISES IN MY TIME--
--BUT NOBODY KNOCKS ME DOWN ANYMORE--
--WITHOUT GETTING FLATTENED IN RETURN!
CHUF!
HUNNFFF!
A'RIGHT, YE SCURVY SCUT--I GAVE YE YER CHANCE!
AT 'IM, LADS!
LET DAYLIGHT THRU THE SLIMY BILGE RAT!
LIKE A PACK OF WOLVES, THE PIRATE BAND SWARMS OVER THE DEFIANT BRUCE BANNER.
IN AN INSTANT, THE SLENDER SCIENTIST IS LOST UNDER THE PRESS OF SNARLING BODIES--

--AND THE SUDDEN, VIOLENT EXERTION HAS THE USUAL RESULT!
GO AWAY, PUNY HUMANS!!
HULK DOES NOT KNOW WHAT HULK IS DOING BACK IN SWAMP-- BUT HULK DID NOT COME HERE TO BE ATTACKED BY LITTLE MEN!
LEAVE HULK ALONE, HUMANS--
--OR HULK WILL MAKE YOU SORRY!
THEN A SUDDEN SCREAM RESOUNDS ACROSS THE CLEARING--
--AND A TWISTED FRAGMENT OF MEMORY DEEP WITHIN THE MAN-BRUTE'S FEEBLE MIND RESPONDS TO THE URGENT CRY!
NO!
HULK WILL NOT LET PUNY HUMANS TAKE QUIET MAN AWAY!
QUIET MAN IS HULK'S FRIEND!
AND HULK NEEDS ALL THE FRIENDS HULK CAN GET!
WHUDD!


NOW HULK AND QUIET MAN ARE LEAVING HERE--AND HULK WILL SMASH ANYONE WHO...
KLINK!
RUM AN' THUNDER! OUR BLOODY BLADES JUST BREAK ON THIS BILGE RAT'S BACK!
HUH?
CHINK!


ATTACK HULK AGAIN, PUNY HUMANS--
THWAMM!
--AND HULK WILL BREAK YOU!


C'MON, M' HEARTIES--THAT LIZARD-LIVERED LUBBER CAN'T BEAT US ALL!
THIS TIME WE'LL CUT 'IM T' RIBBONS!

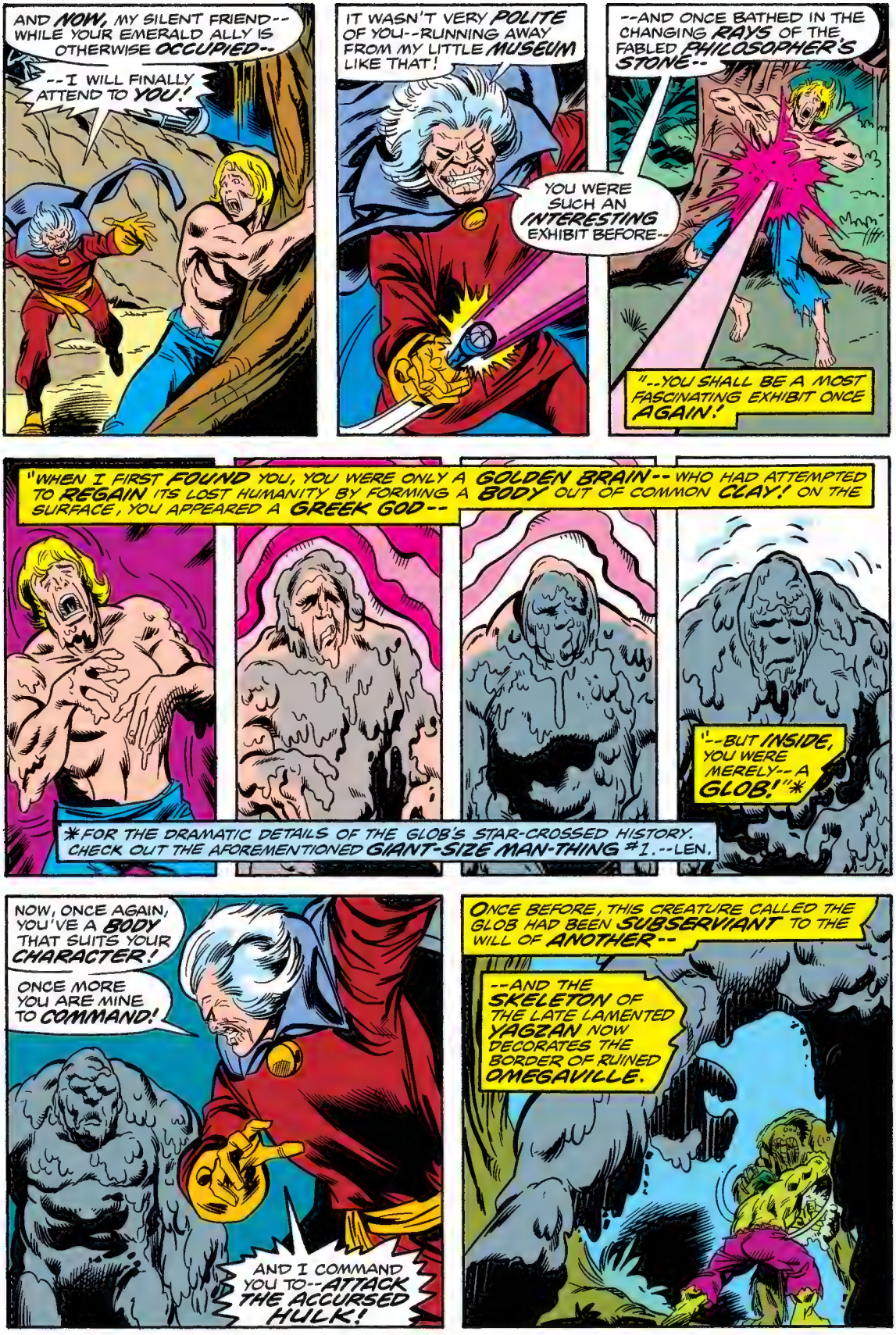
BAH! HULK WARNED LITTLE MEN--BUT THEY WOULD NOT LISTEN!
STUPID HUMANS NEVER LISTEN--
THOOM!

"--AND THEY ALWAYS REGRET IT!"

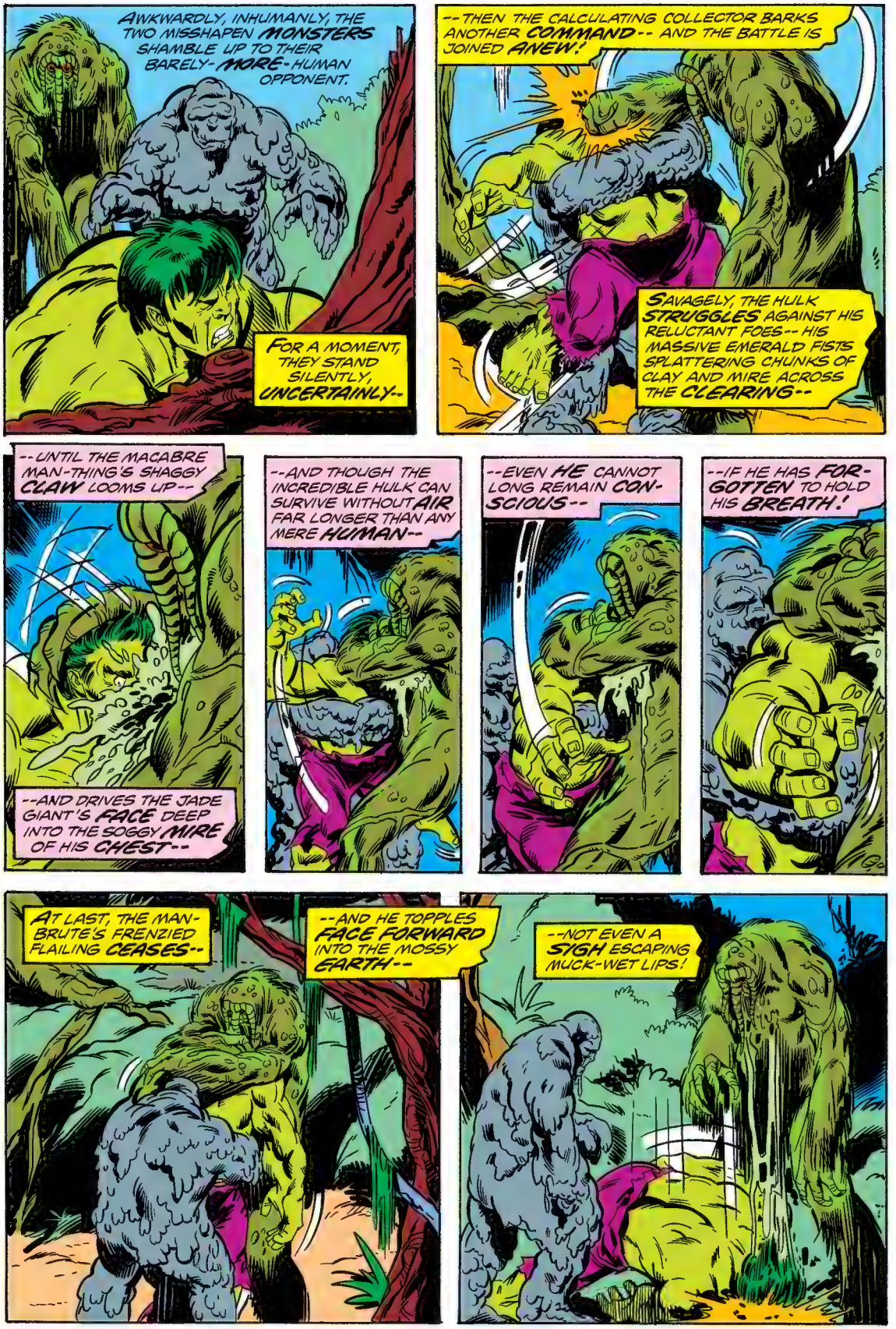
YOU! YOU ARE THE ONE WHO TOLD OTHER HUMANS TO ATTACK HULK--
--SO YOU ARE THE ONE HULK WILL...

STOP! THE BATTLE IS OVER, BRUTE!
WHO--?
YOU WILL NOT RECOGNIZE ME, HULK--FOR WE HAVE NEVER MET--
--BUT THOSE YOU HAVE BEEN FIGHTING HERE BELONG TO ME--
--AS ALL THINGS WORTH HAVING BELONG TO--THE COLLECTOR!*
*LAST SEEN IN AVENGERS #119.--LEN
AT THAT, THE PUCKER-FACED MYSTERY-MAN SMILES BALEFULLY AT THE FAIR-HAIRED OBJECT OF THE PRECEEDING BATTLE--
--AND ABSOLUTE TERROR SPREADS ACROSS THE MUTE ONE'S CHILD-LIKE FACE!
A FACT THAT HAS NOT GONE UNNOTICED BY A FURIOUS GREEN GOLIATH!
GO AWAY, PRUNE-FACE--YOU ARE SCARING HULK'S FRIEND!
GO AWAY--OR HULK WILL SMASH!
IF YOU'RE ALL THAT ANXIOUS FOR COMBAT, BRUTE, YOU'RE WELCOME TO IT--BUT NOT WITH ME!
YOU'LL HAVE TO FACE MY NEW CHAMPION INSTEAD--THE LATEST ADDITION TO MY EVER-EXPANDING COLLECTION!
YOU'LL HAVE TO FIGHT--THE MAN-THING!

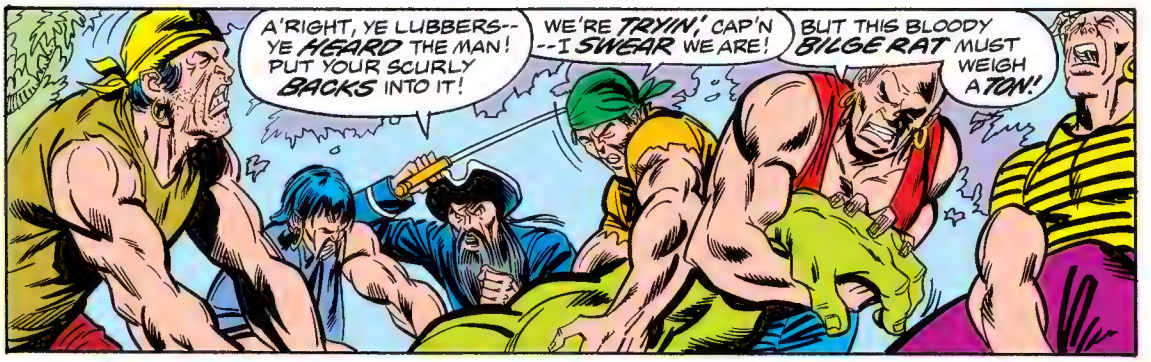
HUH? CARROT-NOSE IS AGAINST HULK TOO?
INDEED, BRUTE--HE IS COMPLETELY UNDER MY CONTROL!
--AND I NOW ORDER HIM TO--STRIKE!
ALMOST RELUCTANTLY, THE MURK-DWELLER SHAMBLES FORTH, HIS MISSHAPEN CLAW FLAILING IN A HEAVY ARC--
BWOK!
--THAT SENDS THE GREEN GOLIATH FLYING!
STUPID CARROT-NOSE! NOW HULK WILL..., HUH?
HULK'S FIST GOES RIGHT THRU YOU!?!
WHAT IS CARROT-NOSE MADE OF?
SWIFTLY, WHILE THE HULK IS CONFUSED--
STRIKE, MY SLAVE--AT THE COMMAND OF THE COLLECTOR!
THUSH!
AGAIN, HIS EMPATHIC NATURE SAVAGELY ASSAULTED BY THE COLLECTOR'S FERVOR AND THE HULK'S RAGE, THE MAN-THING LASHES OUT--
CHUDD!
--AND THIS TIME, HIS EMERALD ADVERSARY'S ANGER IS POSITIVELY BOUNDLESS!
CARROT-NOSE, YOU WILL NOT HIT HULK AGAIN!
HULK HAD NO REASON TO FIGHT CARROT-NOSE--BUT STILL YOU HIT HULK--TWICE!
FWOP!
NOW HULK WILL HIT YOU, CARROT-NOSE--UNTIL HULK SMASHES YOU INTO THE GROUND!


AND NOW, MY SILENT FRIEND--WHILE YOUR EMERALD ALLY IS OTHERWISE OCCUPIED--
--I WILL FINALLY ATTEND TO YOU!
IT WASN'T VERY POLITE OF YOU--RUNNING AWAY FROM MY LITTLE MUSEUM LIKE THAT!
YOU WERE SUCH AN INTERESTING EXHIBIT BEFORE--
--AND ONCE BATHED IN THE CHANGING RAYS OF THE FABLED PHILOSOPHER'S STONE--
"--YOU SHALL BE A MOST FASCINATING EXHIBIT ONCE AGAIN!
"WHEN I FIRST FOUND YOU, YOU WERE ONLY A GOLDEN BRAIN--WHO HAD ATTEMPTED TO REGAIN ITS LOST HUMANITY BY FORMING A BODY OUT OF COMMON CLAY! ON THE SURFACE, YOU APPEARED A GREEK GOD--
"--BUT INSIDE, YOU WERE MERELY--A GLOB!"*
*FOR THE DRAMATIC DETAILS OF THE GLOB'S STAR-CROSSED HISTORY, CHECK OUT THE AFOREMENTIONED GIANT-SIZE MAN-THING #1.--LEN.
NOW, ONCE AGAIN, YOU'VE A BODY THAT SUITS YOUR CHARACTER!
ONCE MORE YOU ARE MINE TO COMMAND!
AND I COMMAND YOU TO--ATTACK THE ACCURSED HULK!
ONCE BEFORE, THIS CREATURE CALLED THE GLOB HAD BEEN SUBSERVIANT TO THE WILL OF ANOTHER--
--AND THE SKELETON OF THE LATE LAMENTED YAGZAN NOW DECORATES THE BORDER OF RUINED OMEGAVILLE.

BUT STILL, THE CLAY CREATURE LUMBERS FORWARD--
--AND MOURNFULLY JOINS THE FRAY!
PLOW!
HUNNFF!!
WHO ATTACKS HULK FROM BEHIND? WHO...?
HUH?
ANOTHER ONE! CARROT-NOSE HAS A FRIEND!
BUT HULK DOES NOT CARE HOW MANY FRIENDS CARROT-NOSE HAS!
HULK WILL SMASH THEM ALL AND THEN HULK WILL...
SPLATT!
BAH! YOU ARE MADE OF CLAY--LIKE CARROT-NOSE IS MADE OF SLIME!
HOW CAN HULK FIGHT CLAY AND SLIME?
HOW??
THE ANSWER, MAN-BRUTE, IS QUITE SIMPLE--
WHOOM!
--YOU CAN'T!
AARRGGHH!


AWKWARDLY, INHUMANLY, THE TWO MISSHAPEN MONSTERS SHAMBLE UP TO THEIR BARELY-MORE-HUMAN OPPONENT.
FOR A MOMENT, THEY STAND SILENTLY, UNCERTAINLY--
--THEN THE CALCULATING COLLECTOR BARKS ANOTHER COMMAND-- AND THE BATTLE IS JOINED ANEW!
SAVAGELY, THE HULK STRUGGLES AGAINST HIS RELUCTANT FOES-- HIS MASSIVE EMERALD FISTS SPLATTERING CHUNKS OF CLAY AND MIRE ACROSS THE CLEARING--
--UNTIL THE MACABRE MAN-THING'S SHAGGY CLAW LOOMS UP--
--AND DRIVES THE JADE GIANT'S FACE DEEP INTO THE SOGGY MIRE OF HIS CHEST--
--AND THOUGH THE INCREDIBLE HULK CAN SURVIVE WITHOUT AIR FAR LONGER THAN ANY MERE HUMAN--
--EVEN HE CANNOT LONG REMAIN CONSCIOUS--
--IF HE HAS FORGOTTEN TO HOLD HIS BREATH!
AT LAST, THE MAN-BRUTE'S FRENZIED FLAILING CEASES--
--AND HE TOPPLES FACE FORWARD INTO THE MOSSY EARTH--
--NOT EVEN A SIGH ESCAPING MUCK-WET LIPS!

THE BATTLE IS OVER--BUT THE VICTORY HAS NOT BEEN FAIRLY WON.
THE GLOB AND THE MAN-THING FEEL NO PRIMITIVE SENSE OF PRIDE AT THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENT.
YOU'VE DONE WELL, MY OBEDIENT ONES. YOU'VE ADDED YET ANOTHER ADDITION TO MY PRECIOUS COLLECTION.!
CAPTAIN CUTLASS--IF YOUR MEN WOULD BE SO KIND AS TO PICK UP THE HULK, PLEASE?


A'RIGHT, YE LUBBERS--YE HEARD THE MAN! PUT YOUR SCURLY BACKS INTO IT!
WE'RE TRYIN,' CAP'N --I SWEAR WE ARE!
BUT THIS BLOODY BILGE RAT MUST WEIGH A TON!

HALF A TON, TO BE PRECISE--BUT, FINALLY, WITH HALF THE CREW TO SUPPORT HIM, THE HULK IS CLUMSILY LIFTED UP--
--AND A MOST BIZARRE PROCESSION BEGINS ITS LABORIOUS JOURNEY THRU THE SWAMP.
STEP LIVELY, ALL--AND KEEP MOVING!
WE'VE GOT WHAT WE CAME FOR--
--AND IT'S TIME TO GO HOME!

NEXT ISSUE: MORE OF THE HULK, THE GLOB, THE MACABRE MAN-THING, THE UNCANNY COLLECTOR--PLUS SURPRISES GALORE--IN A MINOR MASTERPIECE WE CALL... "THE SHANGRI-LA SYNDROME!"

INCREDIBLE HULK
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THE INCREDIBLE HULK®
BACK-TO-BACK WITH THE MIND-BENDING MAN-THING!
IT'S ACTION ALL THE WAY!
MUSEUM OF THE MAD!

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!™

#174

LEN WEIN, WRITER/EDITOR · SAL BUSCEMA & JOE STATON, ILLUSTRATORS · GLYNIS WEIN, colorist · JOHN COSTANZA, letterer · MARV WOLFMAN, MUSEUM PIECE

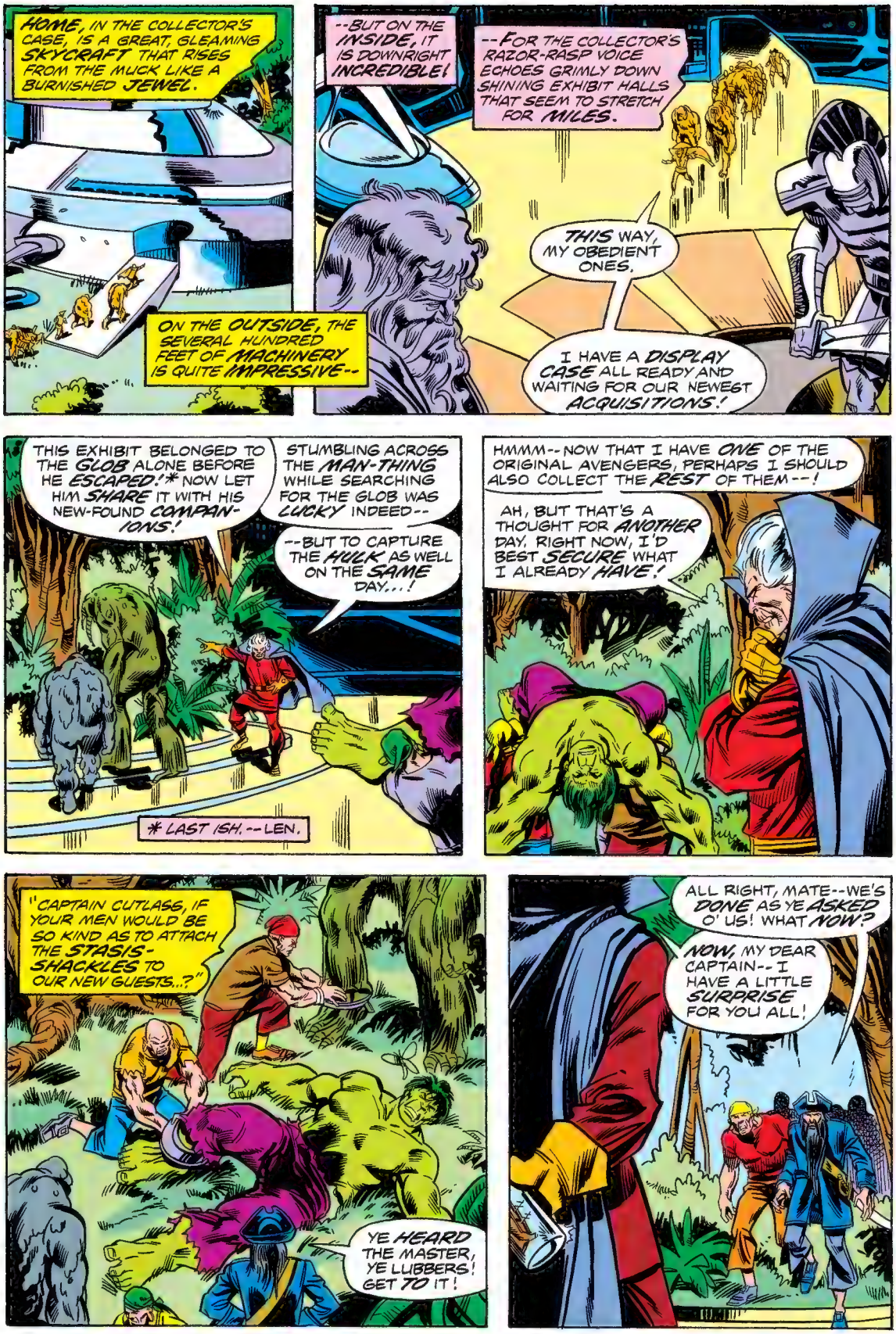
THE SHANGRI-LA SYNDROME!

IT ISN'T EXACTLY THE SORT OF **PARADE** YOU'D EXPECT TO FIND MARCHING DOWN 5TH AVENUE, DRUM MAJORETTES CAREFULLY **TWIRLING** THEIR BATONS, MARCHING BANDS HAPPILY **MUTILATING** SOME MOLDY OLDIE--

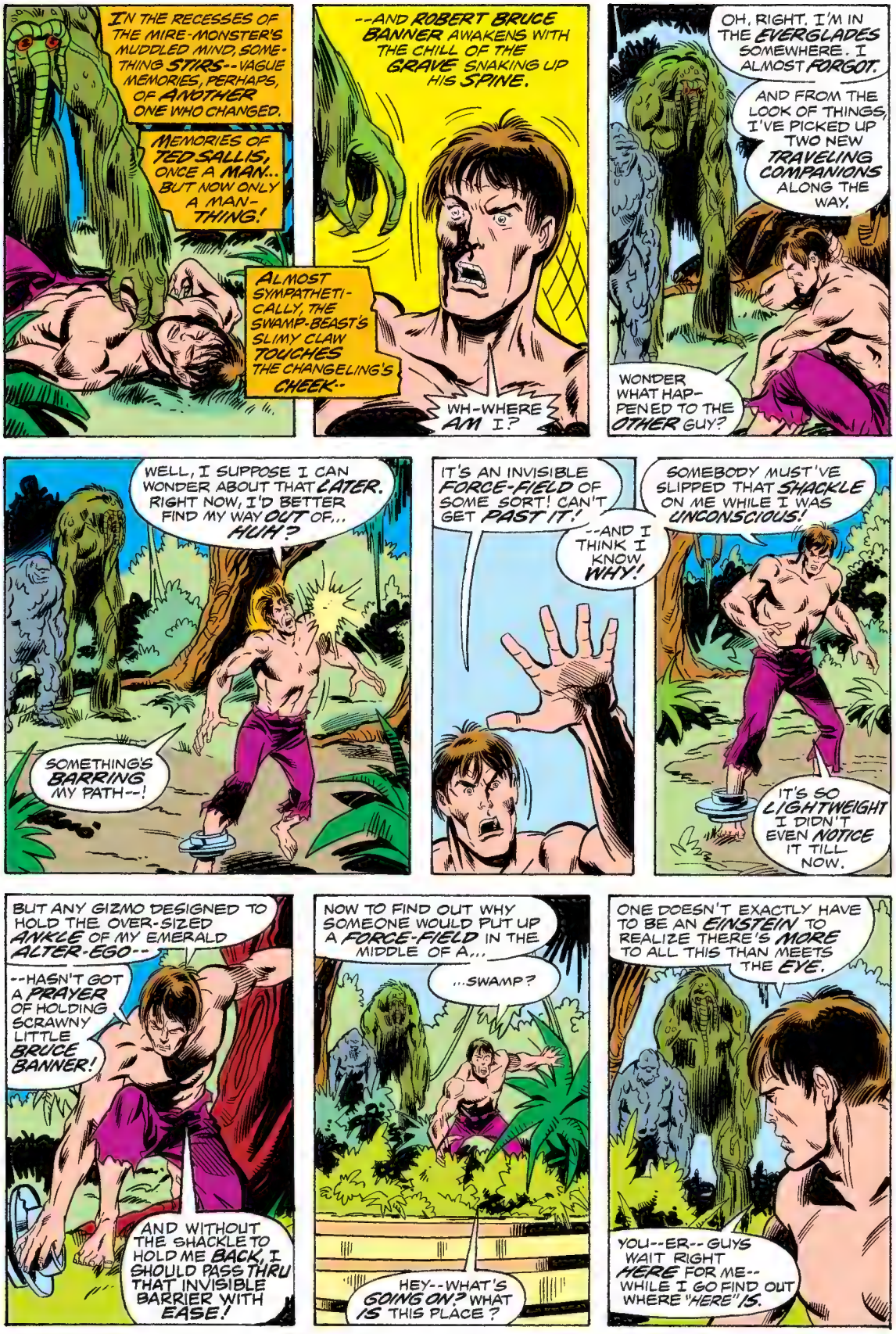
FOR TODAY, THE IVORY-HAIRED MYSTERY-MAN AND HIS MINIONS HAVE COLLECTED THE GRUESOME **GLOB** ...THE MACABRE **MAN-THING**... AND THE EMERALD-SKINNED **STAR** OF THIS BOOK!

--BUT STILL THIS STRANGE **PROCESSION,** TRUDGING HEAVILY THRU THE CLUTCHING MIRE OF THE FLORIDA **EVER-GLADES,** LED BY THE UNCANNY **COLLECTOR,** HAS HAD A **BUSY** DAY.

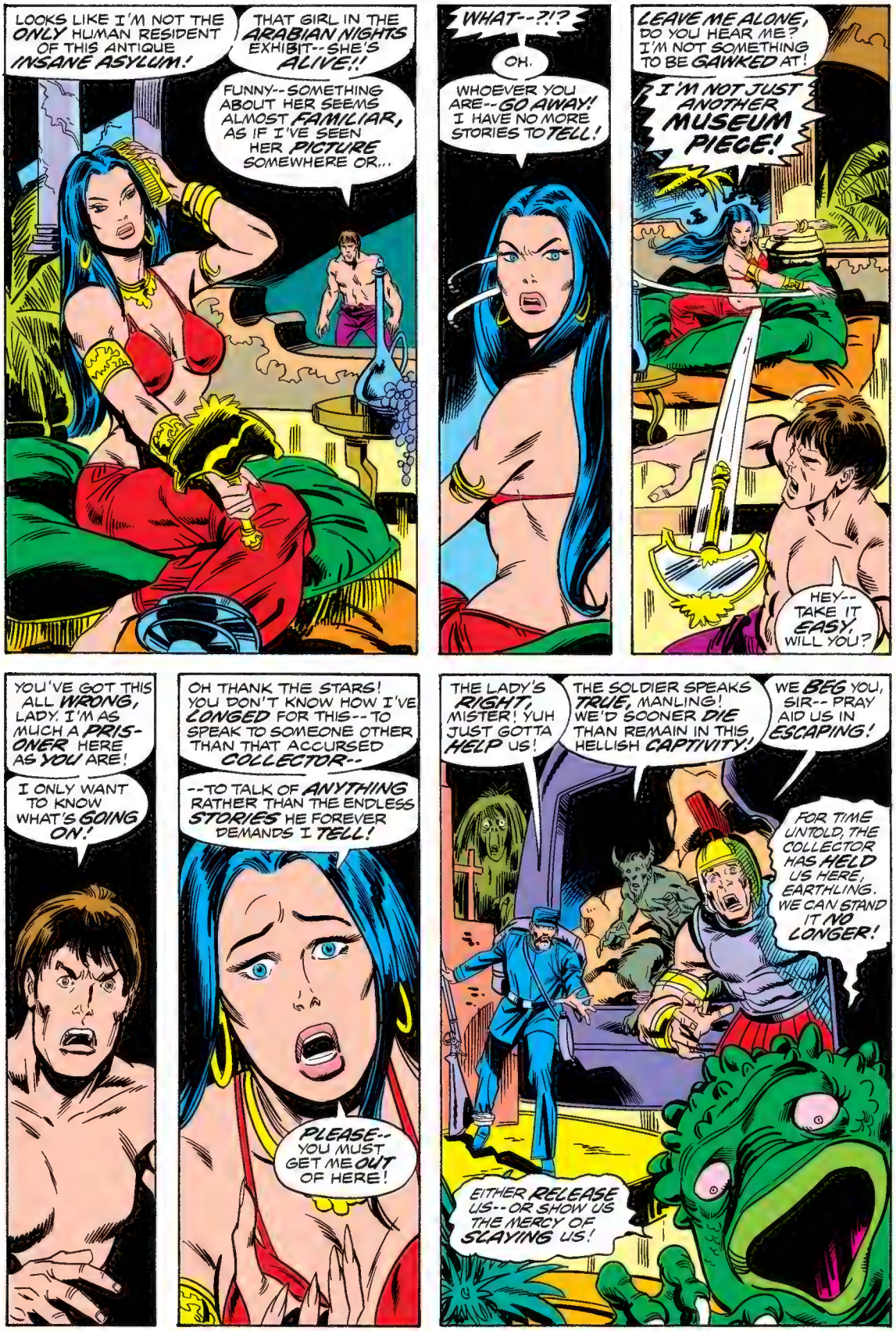
AND NOW THEY ARE ALL GOING-- **HOME!**


HOME, IN THE COLLECTOR'S CASE, IS A GREAT, GLEAMING SKYCRAFT THAT RISES FROM THE MUCK LIKE A BURNISHED JEWEL.
ON THE OUTSIDE, THE SEVERAL HUNDRED FEET OF MACHINERY IS QUITE IMPRESSIVE--
--BUT ON THE INSIDE, IT IS DOWNRIGHT INCREDIBLE!
--FOR THE COLLECTOR'S RAZOR-RASP VOICE ECHOES GRIMLY DOWN SHINING EXHIBIT HALLS THAT SEEM TO STRETCH FOR MILES.
THIS WAY, MY OBEDIENT ONES.
I HAVE A DISPLAY CASE ALL READY AND WAITING FOR OUR NEWEST ACQUISITIONS!
THIS EXHIBIT BELONGED TO THE GLOB ALONE BEFORE HE ESCAPED!* NOW LET HIM SHARE IT WITH HIS NEW-FOUND COMPANIONS!
STUMBLING ACROSS THE MAN-THING WHILE SEARCHING FOR THE GLOB WAS LUCKY INDEED--
--BUT TO CAPTURE THE HULK AS WELL ON THE SAME DAY...!
* LAST ISH. --LEN.
HMMM--NOW THAT I HAVE ONE OF THE ORIGINAL AVENGERS, PERHAPS I SHOULD ALSO COLLECT THE REST OF THEM--!
AH, BUT THAT'S A THOUGHT FOR ANOTHER DAY. RIGHT NOW, I'D BEST SECURE WHAT I ALREADY HAVE!
"CAPTAIN CUTLASS, IF YOUR MEN WOULD BE SO KIND AS TO ATTACH THE STASIS-SHACKLES TO OUR NEW GUESTS...?"
YE HEARD THE MASTER, YE LUBBERS! GET TO IT!
ALL RIGHT, MATE--WE'S DONE AS YE ASKED O' US! WHAT NOW?
NOW, MY DEAR CAPTAIN--I HAVE A LITTLE SURPRISE FOR YOU ALL!

YOU'VE ACCOMPLISHED THE TASK I SET FOR YOU--
--SO IT'S TIME I PUT YOU BACK WHERE YOU BELONG!
MASTER--NO! WE'VE SERVED YE FAITHFULLY AN' WELL!
PLEASE, MATE--YE CAN'T DO THIS TO US!
THAT'S WHERE YOU ARE WRONG, CAPTAIN CUTLASS!
"THERE IS NOTHING I WOULD NOT DO TO FURTHER MY COLLECTION--
ZAK!
--AND NO COLLECTION WOULD BE COMPLETE WITHOUT A GENUINE SHIP-IN-A-BOTTLE!
NOW, NOW, CAPTAIN--LANGUAGE LIKE THAT REALLY WILL NOT HELP YOU!
ONE WOULD THINK THAT AFTER SPENDING 300 YEARS IN THIS BOTTLE, YOU'D HAVE FINALLY GOTTEN USED TO IT!
AH, WELL--AFTER I PUT YOU BACK ON THE SHELF, YOU'LL HAVE ANOTHER THREE CENTURIES TO GROW ACCUSTOMED TO YOUR SITUATION!
HA HA HA HA HA HA
HIS MANIACAL LAUGHTER TRAILING BEHIND HIM, THE COLLECTOR DISAPPEARS DOWN A SPRAWLING CORRIDOR, LEAVING HIS THREE LATEST SPECIMENS ALONE IN THEIR VERDANT CAGE.
DRAWN BY PRIMITIVE CURIOSITY, THE TWO MISSHAPEN MURK-DWELLERS SHAMBLE CLOSER TO THE UNCONSCIOUS EMERALD FIGURE LYING AWKWARDLY BEFORE THEM--
--AND THUS, THEY ALONE ARE WITNESS--
--AS SLUMBER STEALS AWAY THE MANTLE OF THE BRUTE--
--AND LEAVES A CHANGELING IN ITS PLACE!

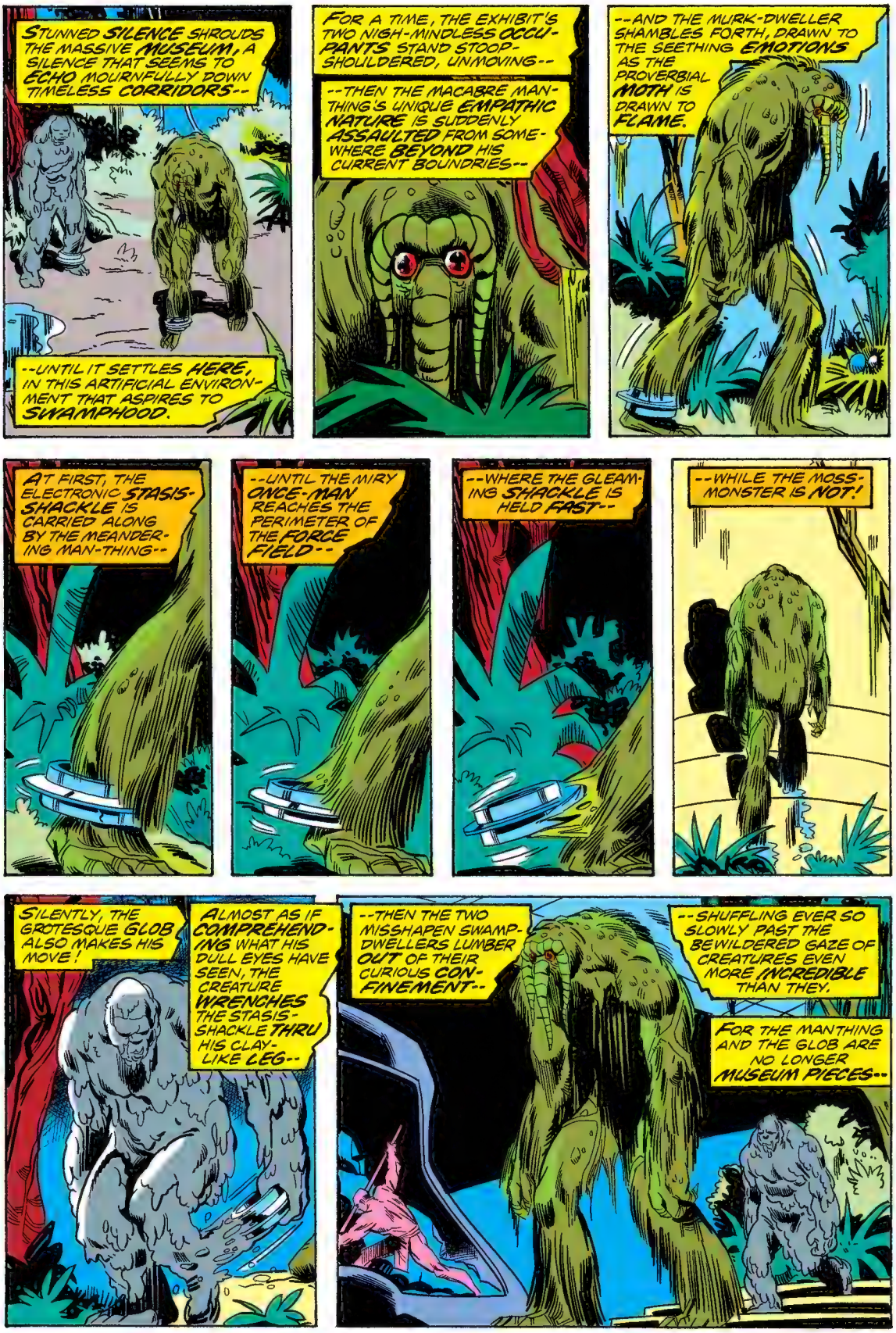

IN THE RECESSES OF THE MIRE-MONSTER'S MUDDLED MIND, SOMETHING STIRS--VAGUE MEMORIES, PERHAPS, OF ANOTHER ONE WHO CHANGED.
MEMORIES OF TED SALLIS, ONCE A MAN... BUT NOW ONLY A MAN-THING!
ALMOST SYMPATHETICALLY, THE SWAMP-BEAST'S SLIMY CLAW TOUCHES THE CHANGELING'S CHEEK--
--AND ROBERT BRUCE BANNER AWAKENS WITH THE CHILL OF THE GRAVE SNAKING UP HIS SPINE.
WH-WHERE AM I?
OH, RIGHT. I'M IN THE EVERGLADES SOMEWHERE. I ALMOST FORGOT.
AND FROM THE LOOK OF THINGS, I'VE PICKED UP TWO NEW TRAVELING COMPANIONS ALONG THE WAY.
WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OTHER GUY?
WELL, I SUPPOSE I CAN WONDER ABOUT THAT LATER. RIGHT NOW, I'D BETTER FIND MY WAY OUT OF... HUH?
SOMETHING'S BARRING MY PATH--!
IT'S AN INVISIBLE FORCE-FIELD OF SOME SORT! CAN'T GET PAST IT!
--AND I THINK I KNOW WHY!
SOMEBODY MUST'VE SLIPPED THAT SHACKLE ON ME WHILE I WAS UNCONSCIOUS!
IT'S SO LIGHTWEIGHT I DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE IT TILL NOW.
BUT ANY GIZMO DESIGNED TO HOLD THE OVER-SIZED ANKLE OF MY EMERALD ALTER-EGO--
--HASN'T GOT A PRAYER OF HOLDING SCRAWNY LITTLE BRUCE BANNER!
AND WITHOUT THE SHACKLE TO HOLD ME BACK, I SHOULD PASS THRU THAT INVISIBLE BARRIER WITH EASE!
NOW TO FIND OUT WHY SOMEONE WOULD PUT UP A FORCE-FIELD IN THE MIDDLE OF A...
...SWAMP?
HEY--WHAT'S GOING ON? WHAT IS THIS PLACE?
ONE DOESN'T EXACTLY HAVE TO BE AN EINSTEIN TO REALIZE THERE'S MORE TO ALL THIS THAN MEETS THE EYE.
YOU--ER--GUYS WAIT RIGHT HERE FOR ME--WHILE I GO FIND OUT WHERE "HERE" IS.

AND MINUTES LATER...
IT'S ABSOLUTELY INCREDIBLE!
THIS ENTIRE COMPLEX IS ONE VAST MUSEUM-- HONEY-COMBED WITH DOZENS OF EXHIBIT HALLS!
WHAT AN ARCHAEOLOGIST'S PARADISE!
I'VE SEEN THINGS HERE THAT MANY OF MY OLD COLLEAGUES WOULD GIVE THEIR EYE-TEETH FOR A CHANCE TO EXAMINE!
EXAMPLES OF NEANDERTHAL MAN SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH SCENES OF ALIEN RACES THAT ALMOST DEFY MY COMPREHENSION--
--ARTIFACTS GLEANED FROM CIVILIZATIONS THAT MOST PEOPLE BELIEVE ARE SHEER LEGEND--
--AND THAT DOESN'T EVEN BEGIN TO SCRATCH THE SURFACE!
THERE'S THE SUPPOSEDLY-MYTHICAL HYDRA MONSTER--
--AND OVER THERE, THE SHIELD OF PERSEUS, WITH THE IMAGE OF THE GORGON STILL BURNED INTO ITS GLEAMING FACE!
IT'S THE MOST REMARKABLE COLLECTION I'VE EVER SEEN!
BUT WHO DOES IT BELONG TO? AND WHAT AM I DOING AS ONE OF THE...?
HOLY HAIRY HANNAH!


LOOKS LIKE I'M NOT THE ONLY HUMAN RESIDENT OF THIS ANTIQUE INSANE ASYLUM!
THAT GIRL IN THE ARABIAN NIGHTS EXHIBIT--SHE'S ALIVE!!
FUNNY--SOMETHING ABOUT HER SEEMS ALMOST FAMILIAR, AS IF I'VE SEEN HER PICTURE SOMEWHERE OR...
WHAT--?!?
OH.
WHOEVER YOU ARE--GO AWAY! I HAVE NO MORE STORIES TO TELL!
LEAVE ME ALONE, DO YOU HEAR ME? I'M NOT SOMETHING TO BE GAWKED AT!
I'M NOT JUST ANOTHER MUSEUM PIECE!
HEY--TAKE IT EASY, WILL YOU?
YOU'VE GOT THIS ALL WRONG, LADY. I'M AS MUCH A PRISONER HERE AS YOU ARE!
I ONLY WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON!
OH THANK THE STARS! YOU DON'T KNOW HOW I'VE LONGED FOR THIS--TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE OTHER THAN THAT ACCURSED COLLECTOR--
--TO TALK OF ANYTHING RATHER THAN THE ENDLESS STORIES HE FOREVER DEMANDS I TELL!
PLEASE--YOU MUST GET ME OUT OF HERE!
THE LADY'S RIGHT, MISTER! YUH JUST GOTTA HELP US!
THE SOLDIER SPEAKS TRUE, MANLING! WE'D SOONER DIE THAN REMAIN IN THIS HELLISH CAPTIVITY!
WE BEG YOU, SIR--PRAY AID US IN ESCAPING!
FOR TIME UNTOLD, THE COLLECTOR HAS HELD US HERE, EARTHLING. WE CAN STAND IT NO LONGER!
EITHER RELEASE US--OR SHOW US THE MERCY OF SLAYING US!

NOBODY'S GOING TO DIE IF I CAN HELP IT, FRIEND! THERE'S GOT TO BE A CONTROL ROOM OF SOME SORT AROUND HERE--
--AND ALL I'VE GOT TO DO IS FIND IT!
IF YOU'D LIKE DOCTOR BANNER--I'D BE MORE THAN HAPPY TO SHOW YOU WHERE IT IS!
WHO--?!?
OF COURSE, YOU WOULDN'T RECOGNIZE ME, DOCTOR--BUT YOUR EMERALD ALTER-EGO KNOWS ME WELL!
I AM CALLED THE COLLECTOR, BRUCE BANNER--AND WE HAVE MUCH TO TALK ABOUT!
AND ON THAT INTENTIONALLY AMBIGUOUS NOTE, WHY DON'T WE TURN OUR ATTENTION TO AN ALL-TOO-FAMILIAR MILITARY COMPLEX DEEP IN THE SPRAWLING NEW MEXICO DESERT...
JUST A FEW MORE DAYS, GENERAL ROSS--AND THE RECONSTRUCTION WILL BE COMPLETE.
EXCELLENT, FIELDING, I'VE WAITED A LONG TIME FOR THIS!
WHEN HULKBUSTER BASE WAS FIRST BUILT, ITS ENERGIES WERE DEVOTED ENTIRELY TO THE ULTIMATE DESTRUCTION OF ONE MAN--
--BUT NOW, IT'S POTENTIAL FOR POSITIVE USAGE IS ALMOST STAGGERING!
GOT A MINUTE, GENERAL?
OF COURSE, QUARTERMAIN--COME ON IN. YOU'RE JUST THE MAN I'M LOOKING FOR!
I'VE GOT NEWS FOR YOU, CLAY... VERY GOOD NEWS INDEED!
CONGRESS HAS FINALLY PASSED ALL THE APPROPRIATIONS, MY BOY. EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, HULKBUSTER BASE NO LONGER EXISTS!
FROM THIS MOMENT ON, WE'RE OFFICIALLY GAMMA BASE--
--DEVOTED TO GAMMA RAY RESEARCH AND, HOPEFULLY, THE EVENTUAL CURE OF ALL THE MONSTERS THOSE RAYS HAVE PRODUCED!
AND TO TOP IT OFF, MAN--I'VE SPOKEN TO COLONEL NICK FURY! HE'S AGREED TO ASSIGN YOU TO GAMMA BASE AS PERMANENT SHIELD LIASON!
I TELL YOU, MY BOY--IT'S THE BEGINNING OF A WHOLE NEW ERA HERE FOR ALL OF US!
WHAT DO YOU SAY TO THAT QUARTERMAIN?
GREAT, GENERAL. THAT'S ALL JUST... SWELL.

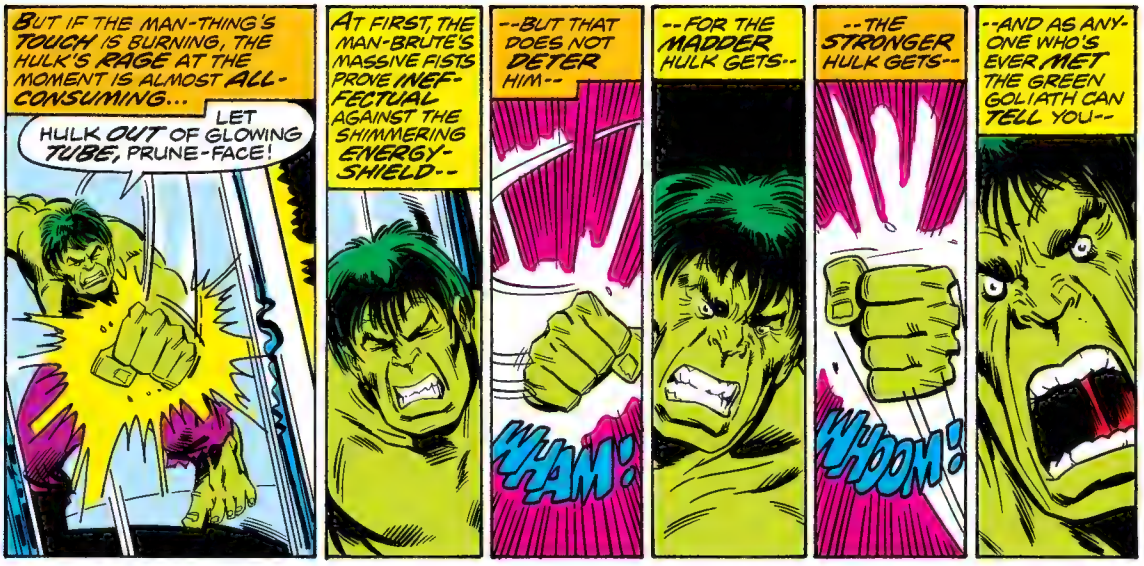
I FIND I'M TRULY ENJOYING YOUR COMPANY, DOCTOR BANNER.
IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I COULD DISCUSS ANYTHING OF INTELLECTUAL MERIT WITH ANY OF MY--AH-- EXHIBITS!
YOU SEEM AWFULLY SURE OF YOURSELF, COLLECTOR.
AREN'T YOU AFRAID I'LL TRY TO ESCAPE-- OR, BETTER YET, TRY TO ATTACK YOU?
AFRAID, MY GOOD DOCTOR? NOT REALLY!
SNAP!
PERMIT ME TO INTRODUCE AKBAR, ONCE PERSONAL BODYGUARD TO KUBLA KHAN, NOW MY OWN AIDE-DE-CAMP.
I FIND I HAVE VERY LITTLE TO FEAR WITH AKBAR AROUND.
BUT DESPITE AKBAR, DESPITE ALL THE COUNTLESS LIVING BEINGS I HAVE COLLECTED OVER THE AGES, I FIND I AM VERY MUCH ALONE HERE.
I TRAVEL THE UNIVERSE OVER, GATHERING MY EXHIBITS, CAREFULLY CATALOGUING THEM, DOING WHAT MUST BE DONE--
--BUT, ALWAYS... I DO IT ALONE!
THAT IS WHERE YOU COME IN, DOCTOR BANNER, FOR YOU TOO ARE ALONE IN A SENSE-- FOREVER CURSED TO BECOME THE MONSTROUS HULK--
--A CREATURE WHOSE MEAGER INTELLIGENCE MUST REVILE A MAN OF YOUR OWN GREAT INTELLECT!
WELL, I CAN RID YOU OF THE MONSTER WHO DWELLS WITHIN YOU, DOCTOR-- FOR GOOD AND ALWAYS!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, COLLECTOR? IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! I KNOW, I'VE TRIED.
PERHAPS, BANNER-- BUT YOU DID NOT POSSES THE LEGENDARY ELIXIR OF LIFE!
DRINK OF THIS-- AND YOU WILL NEVER BECOME THAT HIDEOUS MAN-BRUTE AGAIN!
I SENSE STRINGS ATTACHED TO THIS, COLLECTOR, WHAT'S THE CATCH?
ALL I WANT OF YOU, MY GOOD DOCTOR, IS YOUR COMPANY! SOMEONE TO TALK TO AND HELP PASS THE LONELY YEARS!
IN RETURN, I OFFER YOU A CURE FOR YOUR AFFLICTION-- AND A CHANCE TO EXPLORE THE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE!
WHAT HE OFFERS IS INSANE... BUT WHY NOT? BETTY IS MARRIED. THE WORLD AT LARGE HATES ME.
WHAT HAVE I GOT TO GO HOME TO?
YOU WANT AN ANSWER, COLLECTOR? ALL RIGHT, I'LL GIVE YOU ONE!
MY ANSWER IS YES, MISTER!
YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A DEAL!


STUNNED SILENCE SHROUDS THE MASSIVE MUSEUM, A SILENCE THAT SEEMS TO ECHO MOURNFULLY DOWN TIMELESS CORRIDORS--
--UNTIL IT SETTLES HERE, IN THIS ARTIFICIAL ENVIRONMENT THAT ASPIRES TO SWAMPHOOD.
FOR A TIME, THE EXHIBIT'S TWO NIGH-MINDLESS OCCUPANTS STAND STOOP-SHOULDERED, UNMOVING--
--THEN THE MACABRE MAN-THING'S UNIQUE EMPATHIC NATURE IS SUDDENLY ASSAULTED FROM SOMEWHERE BEYOND HIS CURRENT BOUNDRIES--
--AND THE MURK-DWELLER SHAMBLES FORTH, DRAWN TO THE SEETHING EMOTIONS AS THE PROVERBIAL MOTH IS DRAWN TO FLAME.
AT FIRST, THE ELECTRONIC STASIS-SHACKLE IS CARRIED ALONG BY THE MEANDERING MAN-THING--
--UNTIL THE MIRY ONCE-MAN REACHES THE PERIMETER OF THE FORCE FIELD--
--WHERE THE GLEAMING SHACKLE IS HELD FAST--
--WHILE THE MOSS-MONSTER IS NOT!
SILENTLY, THE GROTESQUE GLOB ALSO MAKES HIS MOVE!
ALMOST AS IF COMPREHENDING WHAT HIS DULL EYES HAVE SEEN, THE CREATURE WRENCHES THE STASIS-SHACKLE THRU HIS CLAY-LIKE LEG--
--THEN THE TWO MISSHAPEN SWAMP-DWELLERS LUMBER OUT OF THEIR CURIOUS CONFINEMENT--
--SHUFFLING EVER SO SLOWLY PAST THE BEWILDERED GAZE OF CREATURES EVEN MORE INCREDIBLE THAN THEY,
FOR THE MANTHING AND THE GLOB ARE NO LONGER MUSEUM PIECES--

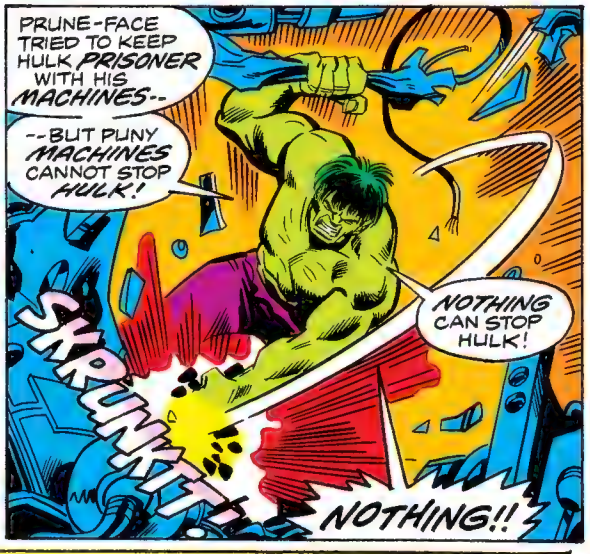
--BUT RATHER A CAUSE FOR ALARM!
I'M QUITE PLEASED WITH YOUR ANSWER, DOCTOR. I'M CERTAIN WE'LL BOTH,..EH?
THE CELL-SIGNAL! ONE OF THE EXHIBITS HAS ESCAPED!
EXHIBITS! THAT'S ALL THOSE PEOPLE ARE TO YOU, ISN'T IT?
I MUST HAVE BEEN INSANE TO AGREE TO YOUR OFFER--BUT I CAN STILL MAKE AMENDS FOR IT!
WHAT--?!?
AKBAR, STOP THAT YOUNG FOOL--SWIFTLY!
AS YOU COMMAND, MASTER!
THE STRIPLING SHALL COME NO CLOSER TO YOUR DIVINE PRESENCE!
HUHHNN!!
BROK!
EXCELLENT, AKBAR! NOW COME!
WE MUST RECAPTURE THOSE WHO ESCAPED!
NO, MASTER! FIRST, FOR DARING TO ATTACK YOU--
--THE STRIPLING MUST DIE!
KRANGG!!
BAH!
M-MASTER, THE STRIPLING IS GONE--AND THERE IS A MONSTER IN HIS PLACE!
BAH! BALD MAN ATTACKS HULK WITH SWORD!
BUT HULK DOESN'T NEED SWORD TO FIGHT WITH!
HULK DOESN'T NEED ANYTHING BUT HULK!
BWHAMM!
HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!

YOU! HULK REMEMBERS YOU, PRUNE-FACE--YOU ARE HULK'S ENEMY!
NO, HULK--STAY BACK! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND--!
HULK HAS FOUND YOU AGAIN--AND NOW HULK WILL SMASH!
I'M NOT YOUR ENEMY --I SWEAR IT!
HERE-- I'LL PROVE IT TO YOU!
JUST DRINK OF THIS ELIXIR! IT WILL CHANGE YOU BACK TO BRUCE BANNER--PERMANENTLY!
STUFF IN BOTTLE WILL TURN HULK INTO PUNY BANNER--THE ONE HULK HATES MOST OF ALL?
WHY WOULD HULK WANT TO BE PUNY BANNER?
WHEN HULK FINDS BANNER, HULK WILL CRUSH HIM--
CHINNKK!
LIKE THIS!
NOW, PRUNE-FACE--HULK WILL CRUSH YOU!
NO, MONSTROUS ONE--I'LL NOT BE YOUR VICTIM TONIGHT!
I AM THE COLLECTOR--AND WITH ALL THE AWESOME POWER AT MY COMMAND--
--I'LL BE YOUR CAPTOR INSTEAD!
HUH?
YOU'RE TRAPPED IN THE MOST POWERFUL FORCE-FIELD AT MY DISPOSAL, HULK--
--SO IF YOU'RE INCLINED TO SMASH AT SOMETHING, TRY SMASHING THAT!
BAH! HULK WILL SMASH PUNY TUBE, PRUNE-FACE, AND THEN...
I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO TABLE YOUR THREATS UNTIL LATER, BRUTE.
RIGHT NOW, I HAVE AN EXHIBIT TO RECAPTURE, BUT WHEN I RETURN--
--I SHALL TEACH YOU WHAT IT MEANS TO DEFY THE UNCONQUERABLE COLLECTOR!

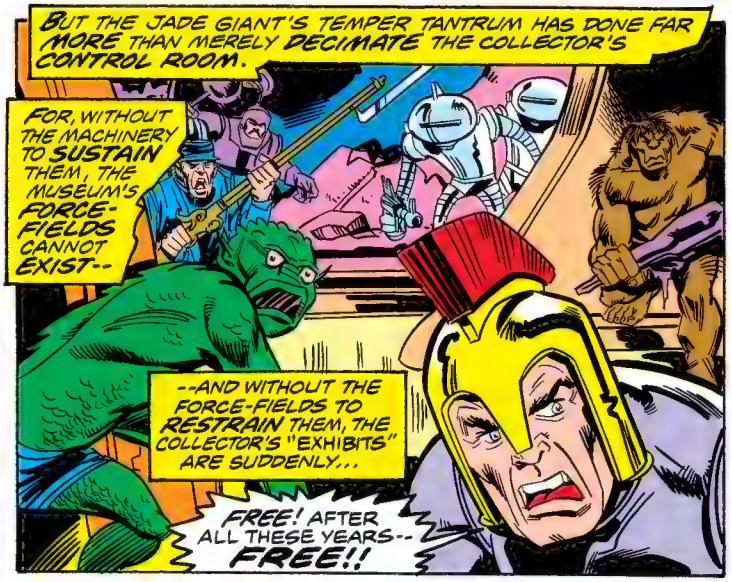
AND AFTER A PAUSE TO COLLECT REINFORCEMENTS...
THE MAN-THING AND THE GLOB! I SHOULD HAVE REALIZED IT WAS THEY WHO ESCAPED--
--AFTER THE HULK ESCAPED FROM THE SAME EXHIBIT!
TAKE THEM, MY FAITHFUL ONES! SUBDUE THEM HOWEVER YOU MUST!
'TWILL TAKE BUT A MOMENT, MASTER!
NOTHING THAT LIVES CAN STAND AGAINST THE TRIDENT OF TIBERIUS!
IN THE ARENAS OF ROME, I STOOD EVER UNDEFEATED BY...
SPWUCK!
HAH! TIBERIUS'S BOASTFUL WAYS WERE EVER HIS UNDOING!
BUT THE FLASHING NET OF BRACHUS WILL DRAW THE OTHER DEMON TO ME THEN...
BY THE GODS! IT CANNOT BE--!
MY METAL NET IS PULLED RIGHT THRU THE ACCURSED CREATURE!
THEN FORGET THE NET, GLADIATOR!
YOU HAVE A SWORD, MAN--USE IT!
BUT WHAT GOOD IS A SWORD, MASTER--AGAINST A MONSTER OF LIVING SLIME?
THE MAN-THING SENSES THE REVULSION IN THE GLADIATOR'S VOICE--AND IT REPELS HIM!
HE REACHES OUT A SLIME-CAKED CLAW TO STIFLE THE UNPLEASANT EMOTIONS--
--AND, REGRETTABLY, THE GLADIATOR PANICS--
--FOR WHATEVER KNOWS FEAR BURNS AT THE MAN-THING'S TOUCH!


BUT IF THE MAN-THING'S TOUCH IS BURNING, THE HULK'S RAGE AT THE MOMENT IS ALMOST ALL-CONSUMING...
LET HULK OUT OF GLOWING TUBE, PRUNE-FACE!
AT FIRST, THE MAN-BRUTE'S MASSIVE FISTS PROVE INEFFECTUAL AGAINST THE SHIMMERING ENERGY-SHIELD--
--BUT THAT DOES NOT DETER HIM--
WHAM!
--FOR THE MADDER HULK GETS--
--THE STRONGER HULK GETS--
WHOOM!
--AND AS ANY-ONE WHO'S EVER MET THE GREEN GOLIATH CAN TELL YOU--

--HIS RAGE-- AND HIS POWER--ARE BOUNDLESS!
SKRA-KOOM!


PRUNE-FACE TRIED TO KEEP HULK PRISONER WITH HIS MACHINES--
--BUT PUNY MACHINES CANNOT STOP HULK!
SKRUNKT!
NOTHING CAN STOP HULK!
NOTHING!!

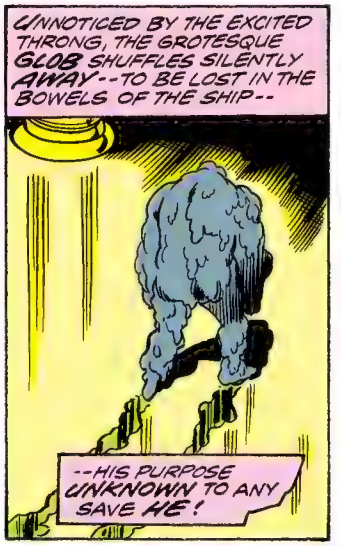
HULK WILL GO FIND PRUNE-FACE--
--AND WHEN HULK DOES, HULK WILL SQUASH HIM LIKE FRUIT!


BUT THE JADE GIANT'S TEMPER TANTRUM HAS DONE FAR MORE THAN MERELY DECIMATE THE COLLECTOR'S CONTROL ROOM.
FOR, WITHOUT THE MACHINERY TO SUSTAIN THEM, THE MUSEUM'S FORCE-FIELDS CANNOT EXIST--
--AND WITHOUT THE FORCE-FIELDS TO RESTRAIN THEM, THE COLLECTOR'S "EXHIBITS" ARE SUDDENLY...
FREE! AFTER ALL THESE YEARS-- FREE!!

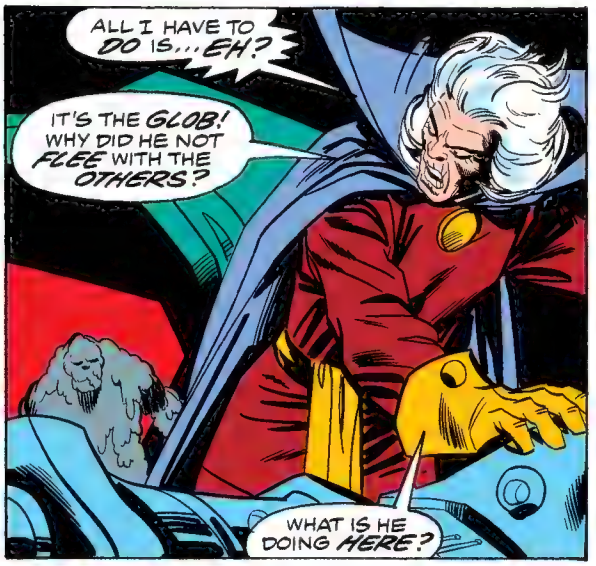
BUT YOUR FREEDOM SHALL BE SHORT-LIVED, FOOLS!
NEVER, COLLECTOR! WE'D SOONER DIE THAN BE YOUR PRISONERS AGAIN!
STRIKE, MY FAITHFUL GLADIATORS! DRIVE THE RABBLE BACK WHERE THEY BELONG!
THEN SO BE IT, FOOLS--SO BE IT!
SO! THERE IS PRUNE-FACE--ON OTHER SIDE OF FIGHT!
NOW HULK WILL MAKE PRUNE-FACE PAY!
HULK IS COMING TO CRUSH YOU, PRUNE-FACE--JUST LIKE HULK PROMISED!
I SHOULD HAVE REALIZED--THAT MINDLESS MONSTER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS!
BUT I MUSTN'T LET HIM GET THOSE GROTESQUE HANDS ON ME--!
MY FRIEND--WAIT! DON'T RUN AWAY FROM US! PLEASE--WE NEED YOU!
WHO--??
OH, IS GIRL.
WHAT DOES GIRL WANT WITH HULK?
I SEE WHY THE COLLECTOR CAPTURED YOU NOW--YOU'RE TWO BEINGS IN ONE! BUT STILL I RECOGNIZE YOUR CLOTHING--AND THE VALOR WITHIN YOU!
YOU SWORE YOU'D RELEASE US AND YOU HAVE! NOW YOU MUST LEAD US TO FREEDOM!
PLEASE, MY HERO--YOU'RE THE ONLY HOPE WE HAVE!
BUT PRUNE-FACE IS GETTING AWAY--AND HULK SWORE HULK WOULD SMASH HIM BEFORE...
HERO?
GIRL THINKS HULK IS HERO?
YES, MY FRIEND--YOU'RE OUR SOLE CHANCE FOR SURVIVAL!
THEN HULK WILL FORGET PRUNE-FACE ...AND DO AS GIRL SAYS!
THE OTHERS WILL ALL FOLLOW YOU!

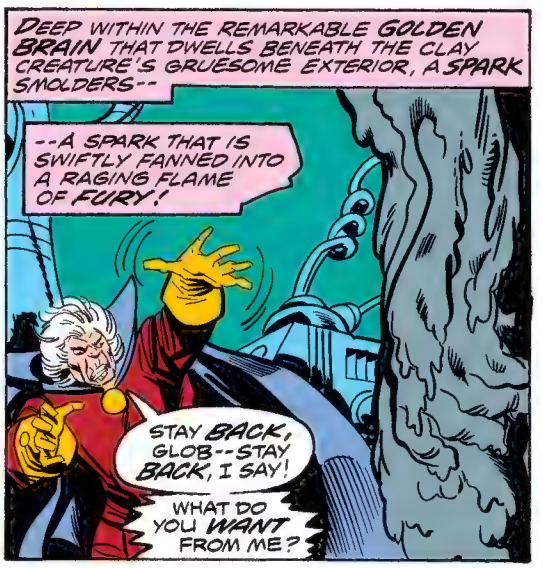
SWIFTLY, MY FRIEND-- THE EXIT-HATCH IS THIS WAY!
COME, HUMANS-- AND HULK WILL TAKE YOU AWAY FROM THIS STRANGE PLACE!
THEN LEAD ON, MAN! TO BE RID OF THIS ACCURSED PRISON, WE WOULD FOLLOW YOU ANYWHERE--
--AYE, EVEN INTO HELL!
ANXIOUSLY, ALL THE COLLECTOR'S EX-EXHIBITS TURN TO ACCOMPANY THE EMERALD MAN-BRUTE OUT OF THIS MUSEUM OF THE MAD--

--ALL, THAT IS, SAVE ONE!


UNNOTICED BY THE EXCITED THRONG, THE GROTESQUE GLOB SHUFFLES SILENTLY AWAY--TO BE LOST IN THE BOWELS OF THE SHIP--
--HIS PURPOSE UNKNOWN TO ANY SAVE HE!

IT'S STILL NOT TOO LATE!
IF I CAN JUST REPAIR THIS RUINED CIRCUITRY, I CAN RE-CAPTURE MY REBELLIOUS COLLECTION!


ALL I HAVE TO DO IS... EH?
IT'S THE GLOB! WHY DID HE NOT FLEE WITH THE OTHERS?
WHAT IS HE DOING HERE?


DEEP WITHIN THE REMARKABLE GOLDEN BRAIN THAT DWELLS BENEATH THE CLAY CREATURE'S GRUESOME EXTERIOR, A SPARK SMOLDERS--
--A SPARK THAT IS SWIFTLY FANNED INTO A RAGING FLAME OF FURY!
STAY BACK, GLOB--STAY BACK, I SAY!
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?

FOR AN INSTANT, THE CLAY CREATURE PAUSES, PONDERING THE COLLECTOR'S QUESTION, RECALLING HOW IT MIGHT YET BE HUMAN BUT FOR THE MYSTERY-MAN'S WHIM*--
--THEN, AT LAST, HIS GOLDEN BRAIN FINDS AN ANSWER.
* AS WITNESSED LAST ISSUE, RIGHT? --LEN.
WHAT THE GLOB WANTS HERE IS QUITE SIMPLE!
HE WANTS THE COLLECTOR'S LIFE!
N-NOOOOO!
THE COLLECTOR'S ANGUISHED SCREAM FADES LONG BEFORE IT CAN FILTER THRU THE MUSEUM-SHIP'S LONG CORRIDORS.
FOR SEVERAL SECONDS, SILENCE REIGNS BOTH WITHIN THE SHIP AND WITHOUT--
--THEN EVERYTHING ABRUPTLY RETURNS TO NORMAL!
PROPELLED BY A SINGLE BLOW FROM THE HULK'S HUGE EMERALD FIST, THE SHIP'S PORTAL ERUPTS SAVAGELY OUT INTO THE SWAMP--
--FOLLOWED, MOMENTS LATER, BY THE SMILING HULK HIMSELF!
OH, HOW GOOD IT IS TO TAKE THAT FIRST FRESH BREATH OF FREEDOM!
COME DOWN, MY FRIEND-- SO WE CAN THANK YOU PROPERLY.
GIRL IS HAPPY?
HAPPIER THAN I'VE EVER BEEN!
COME ON, FOLKS! THERE'S A BOLD NEW WORLD WAITIN' FOR US!
THEN HULK IS HAPPY TOO!
BUT THE BRIGHT REJOICING OF THOSE NEWLY-FREED IS ALL TOO TERRIBLY SHORT-LIVED--
--AS THAT "BOLD NEW WORLD" BEGINS TO CLAIM WHAT IT HAS DUE!
WH-WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME?
F-FEEL SO ODD-- SO WEAK--!

BEFORE THE MAN-BRUTE'S STARTLED EYES, HIS TIME-TOSSED COMPANIONS START TO WITHER AND FALL, THE HEAVY HAND OF THE AGES PRESSING DOWN ON THEM LIKE AN ALL-OPPRESSIVE WEIGHT--
--AND NOT ONE OF THEM IS SPARED!
GIRL? WHAT IS WRONG, GIRL?
OOOOHHH...
HOW CAN HULK HELP YOU?
IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT, MY FRIEND. WE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN...
BEYOND THE PROTECTIVE CONFINES OF THE COLLECTOR'S SHIP, ALL THE UNTOLD YEARS WE SPENT AS HIS CAPTIVES ARE CATCHING UP TO US AT LAST!
NO! HULK WILL NOT LET...
HUSH, MY FRIEND--IT'S ALL RIGHT. WE SAID WE'D RATHER DIE THAN REMAIN THE COLLECTOR'S PRISONERS--
--AND WE MEANT IT!
FAREWELL, MY FRIEND--THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING.
PERHAPS NOW WE CAN AT LAST FIND PEACE...
THE MAN-THING WATCHES THE TRAGIC TABLEAU SILENTLY, HIS EMPATHIC NATURE ECHOING THE HULK'S CONFUSION, FRUSTRATION, AND HELPLESSNESS...
...UNTIL, AS IF SENSING THERE IS NOTHING HE CAN DO...
...HE SHAMBLES OFF, TO BE SWALLOWED BY THE SHADOWS OF THE SWAMP...
...LEAVING BEHIND HIM, A MOST FORLORN HULK, AND A GLEAMING METAL SKYCRAFT, WHICH IS ALREADY BEING OVERGROWN WITH WEEDS.
WITHIN WEEKS, NO ONE WILL EVER BE ABLE TO TELL THAT EITHER OF THEM HAD EVER BEEN HERE.
AND WORSE, NO ONE WILL EVEN CARE!
NEXT ISSUE:
THE HULK BATTLES AN ARMY LED BY THE EMERALD-TRESSED DOC SAMSON...
"AND SHIELD SHALL FOLLOW!"

HULK ANNUAL
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ALL NEW!
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THE INCREDIBLE
HULK®
IN COMBAT WITH THE 6 MOST SAVAGE FOES OF ALL!!
GROOT, MASTER OF PLANTS
XEMNU, THE LIVING TITAN!
THE ELECTRIFYING BLIP!
THE CREATURE CALLED GOOM!
DIABLO MONSTER FROM DIMENSION X!
TABOO THE TERRIBLE!

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!™

CHRIS CLAREMONT *Script* * SAL BUSCEMA & JACK ABEL *Artists* * LEN WEIN *Plotter/Editor* * JOE ROSEN, *Letterer* GLYNIS WEIN, *Colorist*

AND SIX SHALL CRUSH THE HULK!

FORT CARSON, COLORADO: *HEADQUARTERS OF THE FAMED THIRD ARMORED DIVISION, SPEARHEAD OUTFIT OF THE* ***NEW ACTION ARMY,*** *THE ARMY THAT WANTS TO JOIN* ***YOU...***

...THOUGH, WHEN A ***RECRUIT*** *GETS PROMISED "ACTION", ONE* ***WONDERS*** *IF THIS WAS* ***PRECISELY*** *WHAT THE PENTAGON HAD IN* ***MIND!***

McGUIRE, I'M HITTIN' THAT ***GREEN GOLIATH*** WITH MY ROCKET-LAUNCHER AT ***POINT-BLANK RANGE--***

--AN' I'M NOT EVEN ***FAZIN'*** HIM!

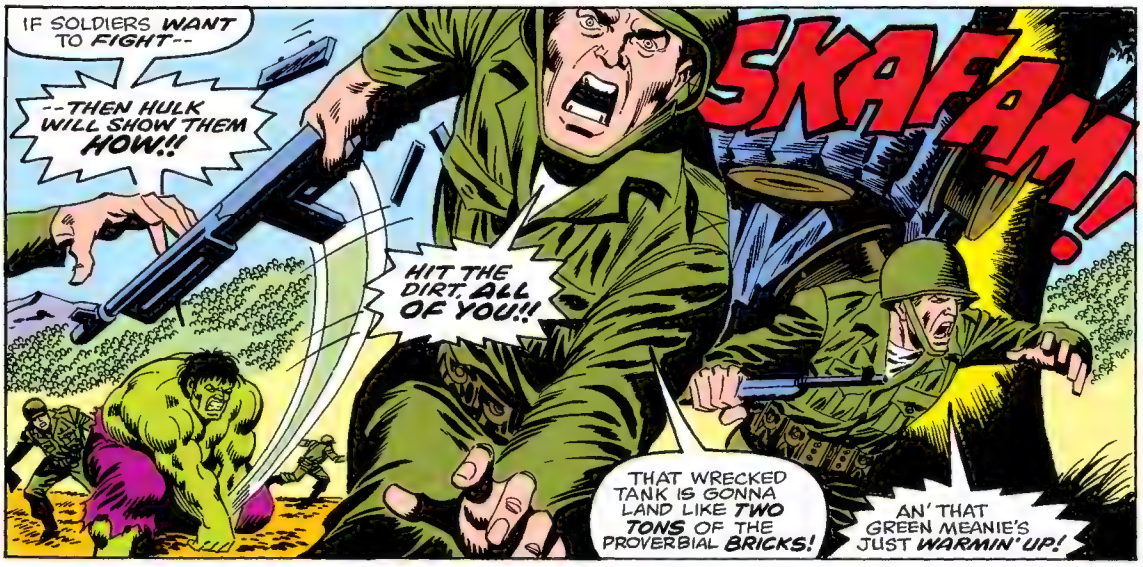
SOLDIERS! ***ALWAYS SOLDIERS!!*** WHY WON'T SOLDIERS LEAVE HULK ***ALONE?!***

HULK CAME TO ***FOREST*** TO BE ALONE, TO GET AWAY FROM ***HUMANS--*** BUT SOLDIERS WON'T ***LET*** HULK DO THAT--

--ALL ***SOLDIERS*** WANT TO DO IS ***FIGHT!***

THIS IS ***CRAZY--!*** WE'RE JUST ORDINARY FOOT-SLOGGERS-- ***GRUNTS!***

WHAT KINDA CHANCE HAVE WE ***GOT*** AGAINST A MONSTER THAT TOSSES ***TANKS*** AROUND LIKE THEY WUZ ***TOYS!?***

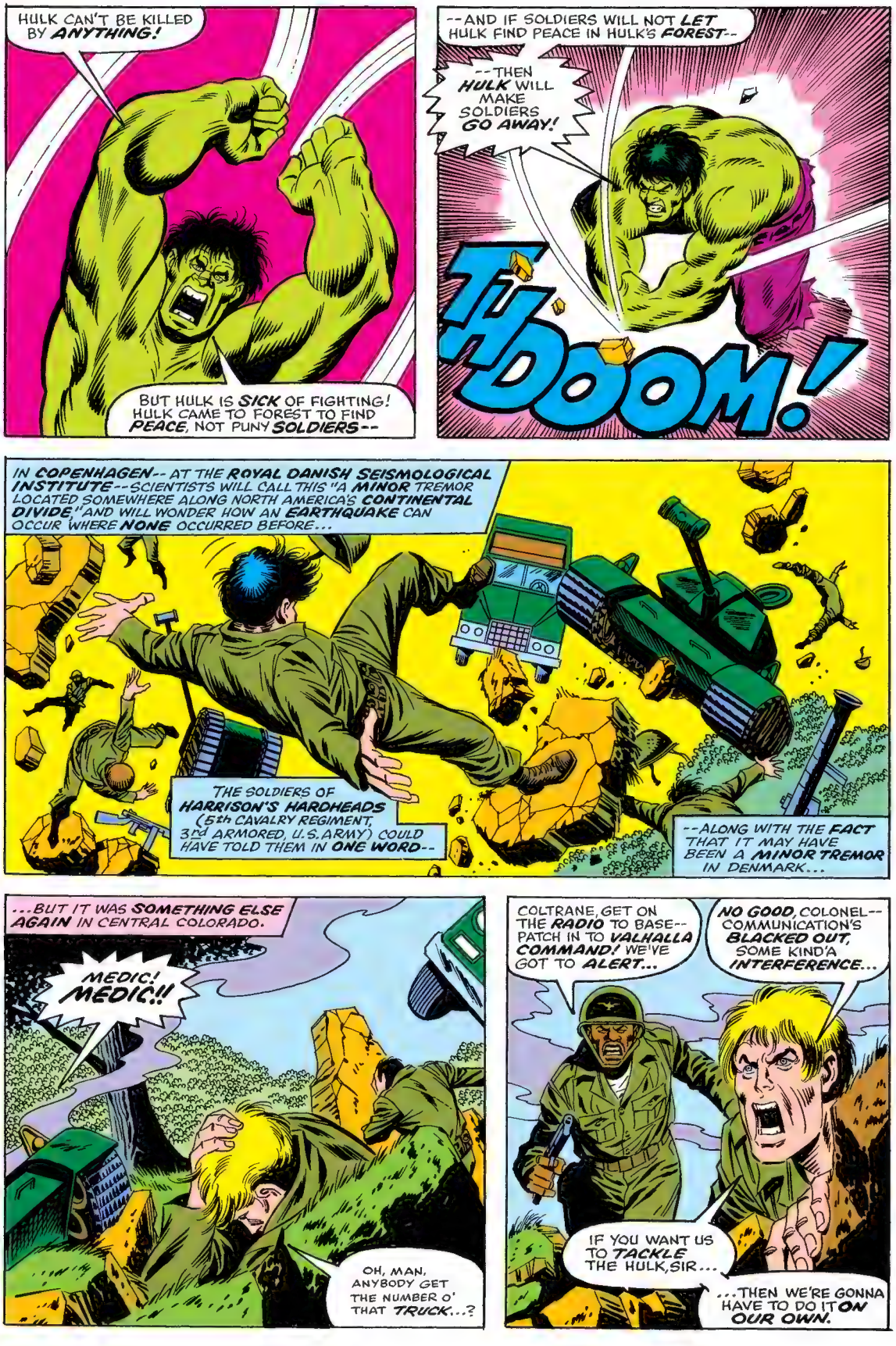

IF SOLDIERS WANT TO FIGHT--
--THEN HULK WILL SHOW THEM HOW!!
SKAFAM!
HIT THE DIRT, ALL OF YOU!!
THAT WRECKED TANK IS GONNA LAND LIKE TWO TONS OF THE PROVERBIAL BRICKS!
AN' THAT GREEN MEANIE'S JUST WARMIN' UP!

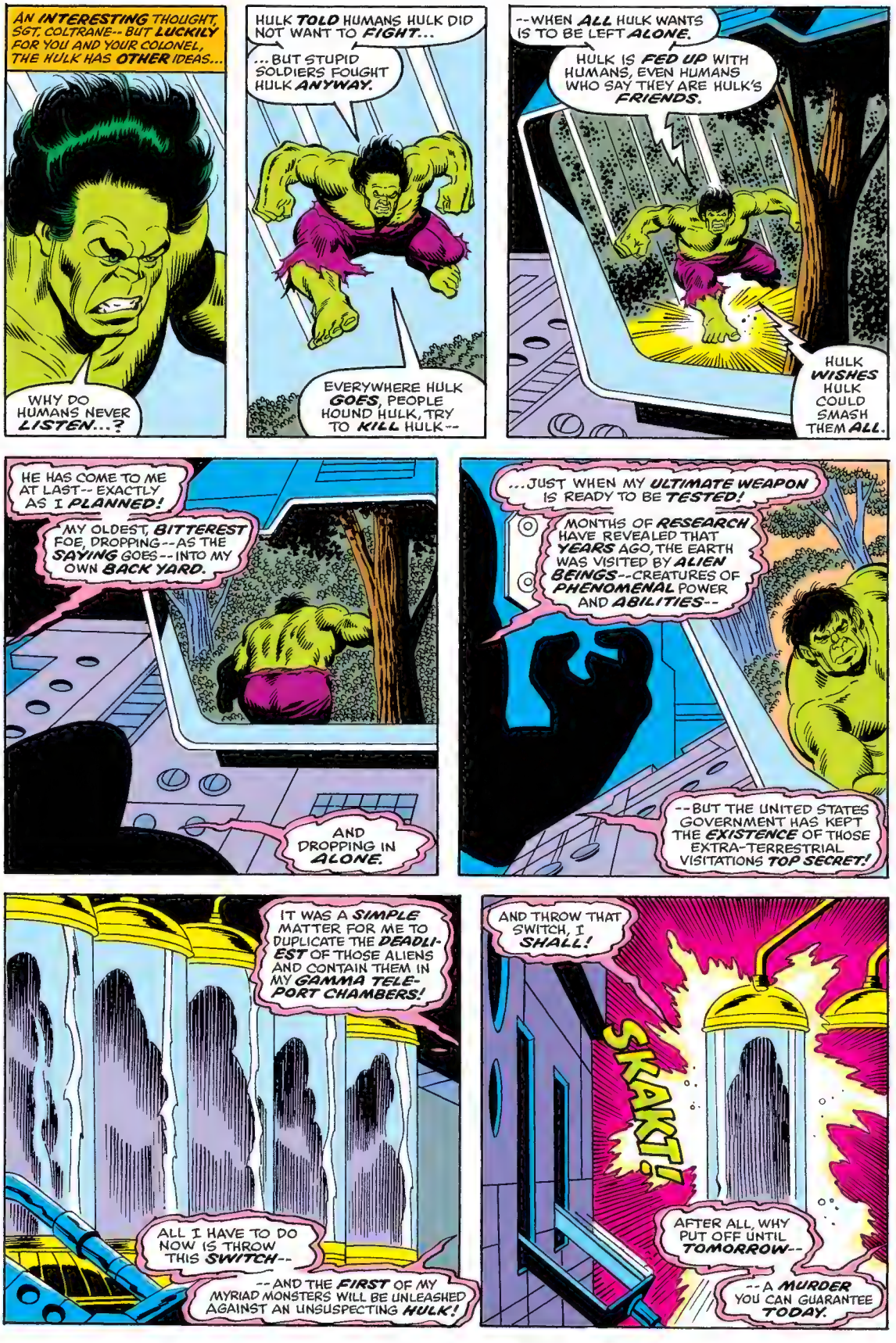
LISTEN TO HULK, HUMANS! HULK DOES NOT WANT TO FIGHT! HULK NEVER WANTS TO FIGHT!
HULK ONLY WANTS TO BE LEFT IN PEACE!
SO LEAVE HULK IN PEACE, HUMANS--
--OR HULK WILL SMASH YOU ALL!!

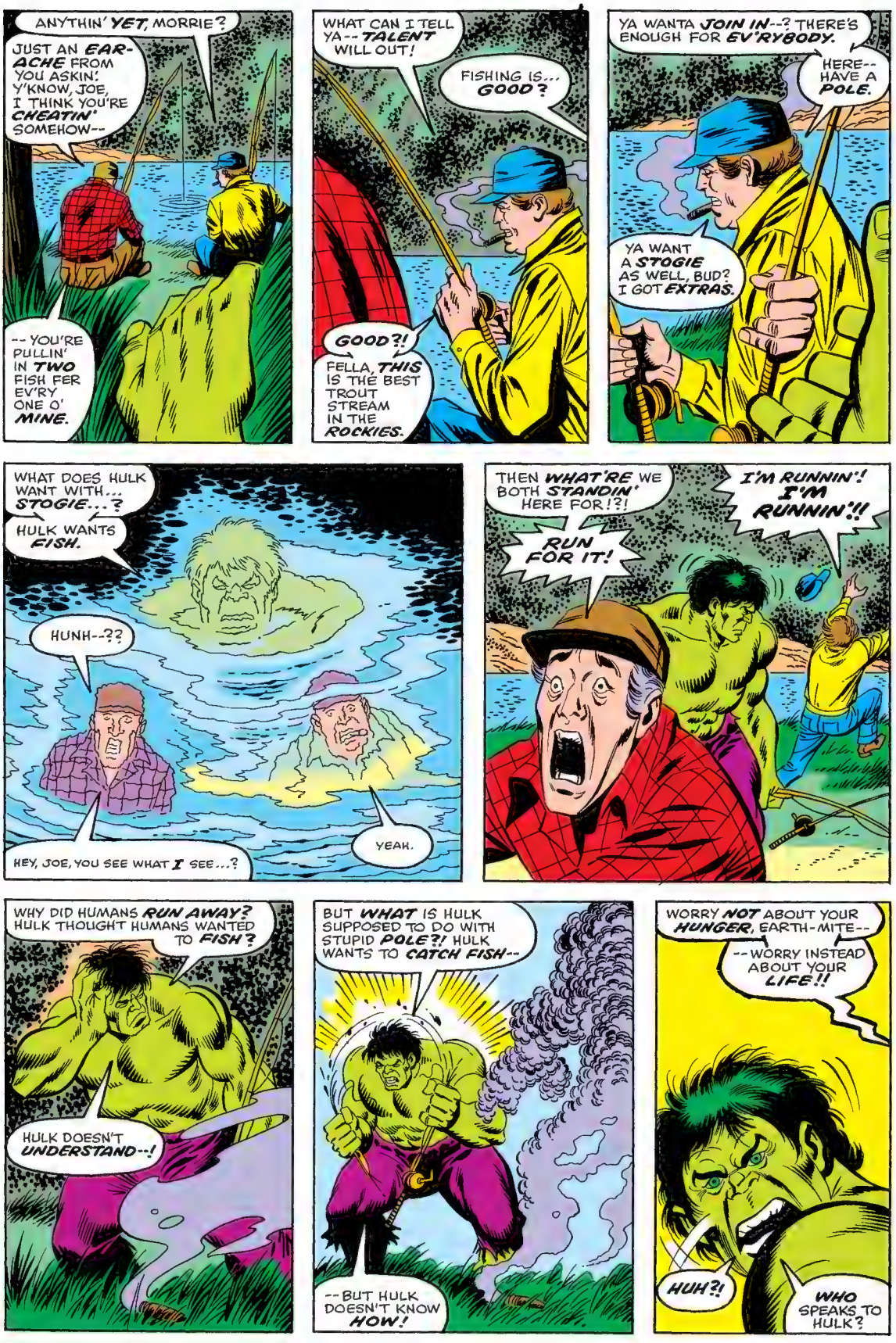
I ONLY WISH WE COULD, BIG FELLA--
--BUT THIS IS A TOP SECRET BASE AND THE ORDERS SAY NO INTRUDERS.
THAT GOES FOR JUST PLAIN FOLKS, FOR SUPER-HEROES--
--AND IT GOES FOR YOU, TOO!

WHICH MEANS, FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, MEN--
--OPEN FIRE!
MAN, "HARD-BUTT" HARRISON AIN'T CHANGED A BIT SINCE 'NAM.
HE'S STILL ASKIN' US TO DO THE IMPOSSIBLE--
--AN' EXPECTIN' US TO PULL IT OFF!

DON'T STUPID HUMANS EVER LEARN?
HULK CAN'T BE KILLED BY PUNY BULLETS!


HULK CAN'T BE KILLED BY ANYTHING!
BUT HULK IS SICK OF FIGHTING! HULK CAME TO FOREST TO FIND PEACE, NOT PUNY SOLDIERS--
--AND IF SOLDIERS WILL NOT LET HULK FIND PEACE IN HULK'S FOREST--
--THEN HULK WILL MAKE SOLDIERS GO AWAY!
TH'DOOM!
IN COPENHAGEN-- AT THE ROYAL DANISH SEISMOLOGICAL INSTITUTE--SCIENTISTS WILL CALL THIS "A MINOR TREMOR LOCATED SOMEWHERE ALONG NORTH AMERICA'S CONTINENTAL DIVIDE," AND WILL WONDER HOW AN EARTHQUAKE CAN OCCUR WHERE NONE OCCURRED BEFORE...
THE SOLDIERS OF HARRISON'S HARDHEADS (5th CAVALRY REGIMENT, 3rd ARMORED, U.S. ARMY) COULD HAVE TOLD THEM IN ONE WORD--
--ALONG WITH THE FACT THAT IT MAY HAVE BEEN A MINOR TREMOR IN DENMARK...
...BUT IT WAS SOMETHING ELSE AGAIN IN CENTRAL COLORADO.
MEDIC! MEDIC!!
OH, MAN, ANYBODY GET THE NUMBER O' THAT TRUCK...?
COLTRANE, GET ON THE RADIO TO BASE--PATCH IN TO VALHALLA COMMAND! WE'VE GOT TO ALERT...
NO GOOD, COLONEL--COMMUNICATION'S BLACKED OUT, SOME KIND'A INTERFERENCE...
IF YOU WANT US TO TACKLE THE HULK, SIR...
...THEN WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO DO IT ON OUR OWN.


AN INTERESTING THOUGHT, SGT. COLTRANE-- BUT LUCKILY FOR YOU AND YOUR COLONEL, THE HULK HAS OTHER IDEAS...
WHY DO HUMANS NEVER LISTEN...?
HULK TOLD HUMANS HULK DID NOT WANT TO FIGHT...
...BUT STUPID SOLDIERS FOUGHT HULK ANYWAY.
EVERYWHERE HULK GOES, PEOPLE HOUND HULK, TRY TO KILL HULK--
--WHEN ALL HULK WANTS IS TO BE LEFT ALONE.
HULK IS FED UP WITH HUMANS, EVEN HUMANS WHO SAY THEY ARE HULK'S FRIENDS.
HULK WISHES HULK COULD SMASH THEM ALL.
HE HAS COME TO ME AT LAST-- EXACTLY AS I PLANNED!
MY OLDEST, BITTEREST FOE, DROPPING--AS THE SAYING GOES--INTO MY OWN BACK YARD.
AND DROPPING IN ALONE.
...JUST WHEN MY ULTIMATE WEAPON IS READY TO BE TESTED!
MONTHS OF RESEARCH HAVE REVEALED THAT YEARS AGO, THE EARTH WAS VISITED BY ALIEN BEINGS--CREATURES OF PHENOMENAL POWER AND ABILITIES--
--BUT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS KEPT THE EXISTENCE OF THOSE EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL VISITATIONS TOP SECRET!
IT WAS A SIMPLE MATTER FOR ME TO DUPLICATE THE DEADLIEST OF THOSE ALIENS AND CONTAIN THEM IN MY GAMMA TELEPORT CHAMBERS!
ALL I HAVE TO DO NOW IS THROW THIS SWITCH--
--AND THE FIRST OF MY MYRIAD MONSTERS WILL BE UNLEASHED AGAINST AN UNSUSPECTING HULK!
AND THROW THAT SWITCH, I SHALL!
SKAKT!
AFTER ALL, WHY PUT OFF UNTIL TOMORROW--
--A MURDER YOU CAN GUARANTEE TODAY.

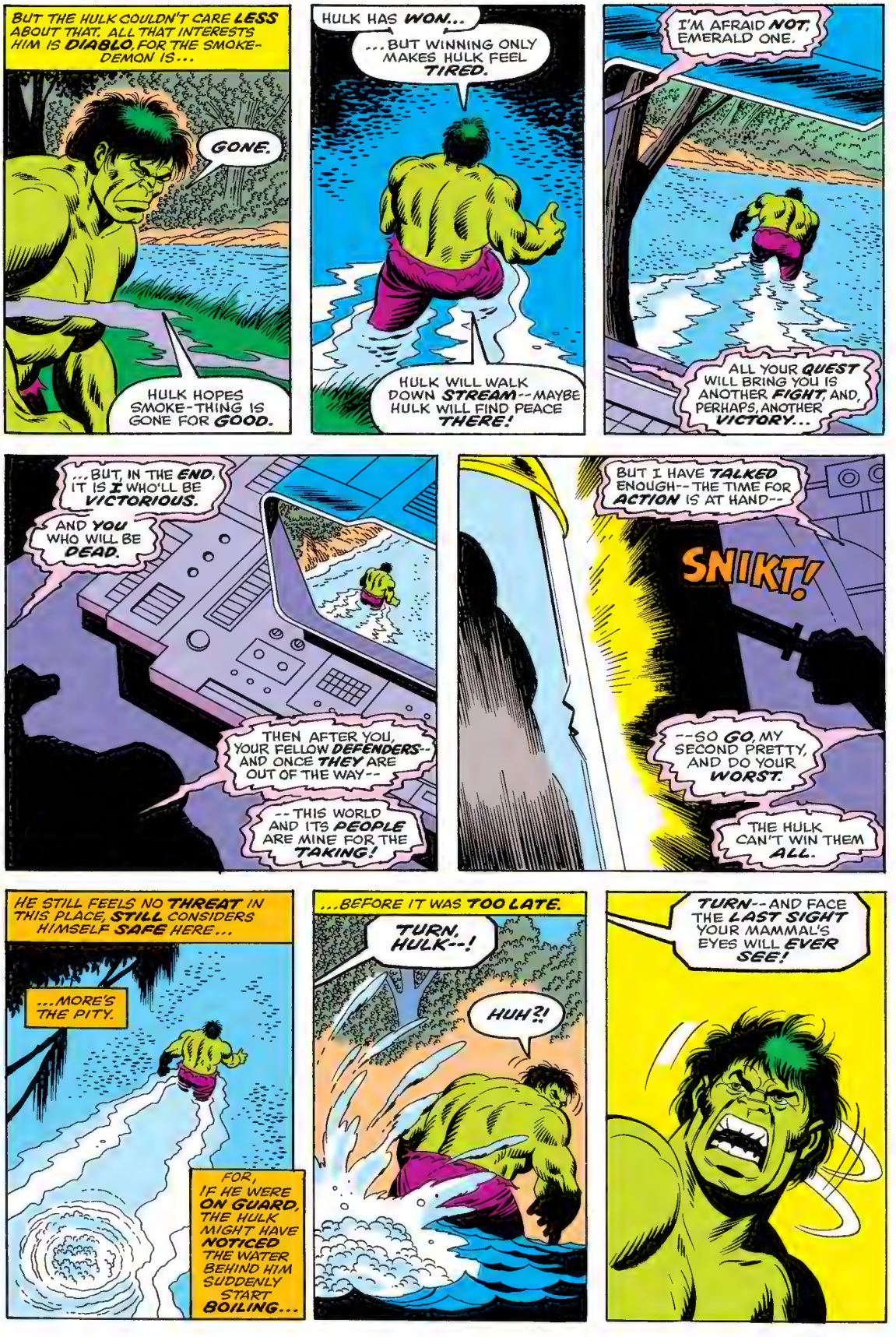

ANYTHIN' YET, MORRIE?
JUST AN EAR-ACHE FROM YOU ASKIN'. Y'KNOW, JOE, I THINK YOU'RE CHEATIN' SOMEHOW--
-- YOU'RE PULLIN' IN TWO FISH FER EV'RY ONE O' MINE.
WHAT CAN I TELL YA-- TALENT WILL OUT!
FISHING IS... GOOD?
GOOD?!
FELLA, THIS IS THE BEST TROUT STREAM IN THE ROCKIES.
YA WANTA JOIN IN--? THERE'S ENOUGH FOR EV'RYBODY.
HERE-- HAVE A POLE.
YA WANT A STOGIE AS WELL, BUD? I GOT EXTRAS.
WHAT DOES HULK WANT WITH... STOGIE...?
HULK WANTS FISH.
HUNH--??
HEY, JOE, YOU SEE WHAT I SEE...?
YEAH.
THEN WHAT'RE WE BOTH STANDIN' HERE FOR!?!
RUN FOR IT!
I'M RUNNIN'! I'M RUNNIN'!!
WHY DID HUMANS RUN AWAY? HULK THOUGHT HUMANS WANTED TO FISH?
HULK DOESN'T UNDERSTAND--!
BUT WHAT IS HULK SUPPOSED TO DO WITH STUPID POLE?! HULK WANTS TO CATCH FISH--
--BUT HULK DOESN'T KNOW HOW!
WORRY NOT ABOUT YOUR HUNGER, EARTH-MITE--
--WORRY INSTEAD ABOUT YOUR LIFE!!
HUH?!
WHO SPEAKS TO HULK?

CHAPTER 2:
WHERE THERE'S SMOKE, THERE'S DIABLO!
BEHOLD, MORTAL, THE BEING WHO WILL DESSSTROY YOU-- BEHOLD THE DEMON FROM THE FIFTH DIMENSSSION--
BEHOLD, DIABLO!!
ONCE BEFORE I WALKED THISSS WORLD*-- AND ALL MANKIND TREMBLED BEFORE ME!
I WASSS TRICKED INTO FLEEING BY A CUNNING HUMAN, BUT I WILL NOT BE TRICKED AGAIN!
THIS TIME-- DIABLO WILL TRIUMPH!
WHAT HAS THAT TO DO WITH HULK?
HULK HAS NEVER SEEN SMOKE-THING BEFORE-- WHY DOES SMOKE-THING WANT TO KILL HULK?
*ORIGINALLY PRESENTED IN TALES OF SUSPENSE #9--LEN.

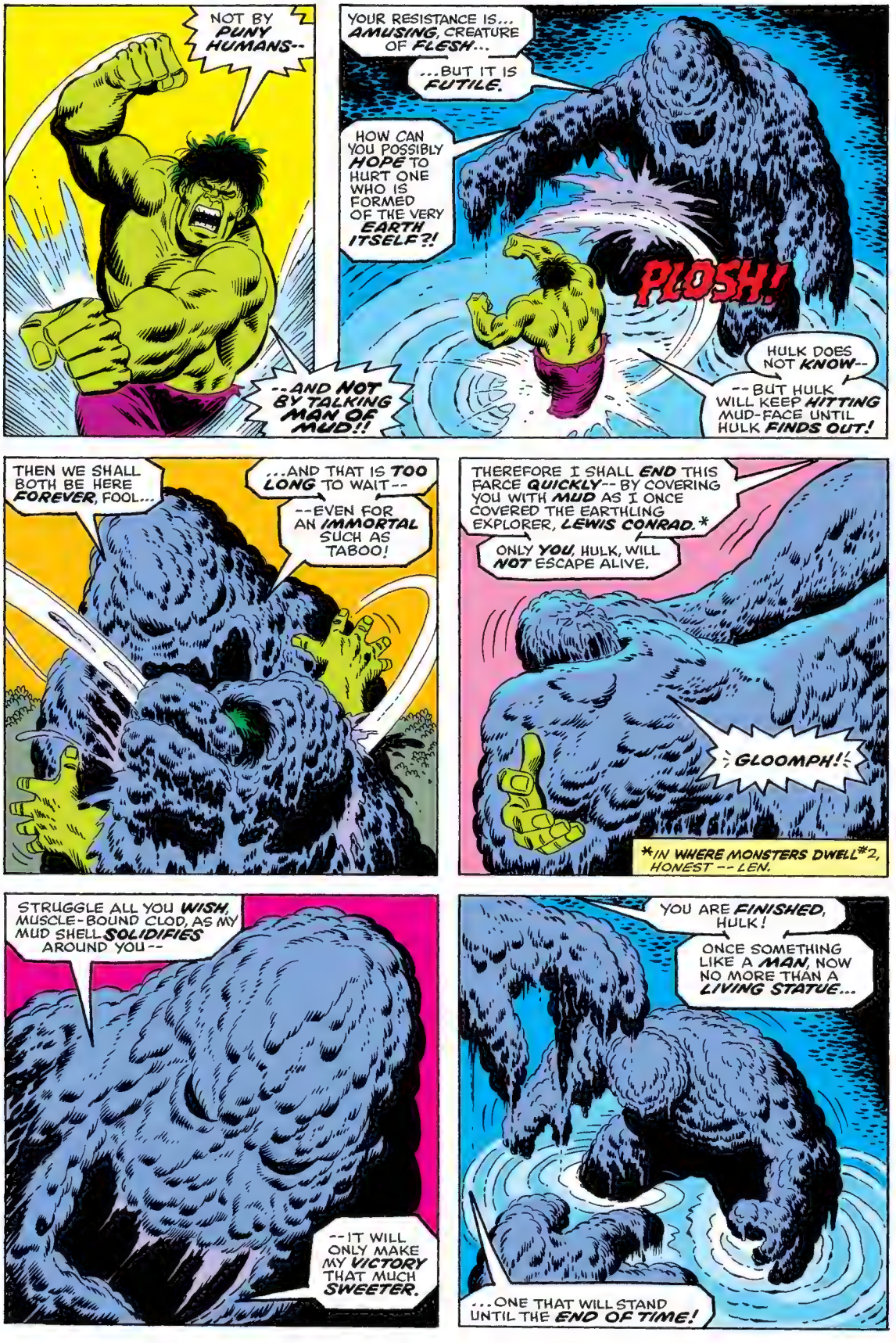
IF SMOKE-THING WANTS TO SMASH HULK--
--THEN HULK WILL SMASH HIM FIR--
HUH--?!
HULK'S FIST GOES RIGHT THRU SMOKE-THING, LIKE HULK WAS HITTING AIR!
HAVING TROUBLE, MORTAL?
SSSURELY DIABLO ISSS TOO BIG A TARGET FOR EVEN YOU TO MISSS.
TRY AGAIN, HULK-- I WILL NOT GO AWAY.
SMOKE-THING IS MAKING FUN OF HULK, LAUGHING AT HULK--!
SMOKE-THING WILL STOP LAUGHING WHEN HULK HITS--
BUT YOU CANNOT, EARTHLY FOOL!
BDOW!
--BUT DIABLO CAN MOSSST ASSSUREDLY HIT YOU!
YOU CANNOT HIT DIABLO, HULK--
YOU ARE HELPLESSS AGAINSSST ME, CRETIN-- FOR DIABLO ISSS ABSSSOLUTE MASSSTER OF HISSS MOLECULAR DENSSSITY!
ONE SSSECOND, I CAN BE ASSS EPHEMERAL ASSS THE MORNING MISSST, AND IN THE NEXT SSSTRIKE WITH THE FORSSSE OF A NUCLEAR BOMB!
ON THE OTHER HAND, I CAN DESSSTROY YOU SSSLOWLY.
BREATHE, HULK, BREATHE THE SSSUBSSS-TANSSSE THAT ISSS DIABLO.
LET HULK GO, SMOKE-THING--
--KOFF-KOFF--
--HULK...CANNOT... BREATHE...

DIABLO KNOWSSS, EARTHLING--
--THAT ISS THE POINT.
I AM PURE SSSMOKE, HULK, AND MY ESSSENSSSE IS DEADLY TO YOUR AIR-BREATHING KIND.
MAKE IT EASSSY ON YOURSSSELF, SSSMALL ONE--
--TWO OR THREE DEEP BREATHSSS AND EVERYTHING WILL BE OVER.
FOOM!
GIVE UP, HULK--ALL THE SSSTRUGGLING IN THE WORLD WILL NOT SSSAVE YOU NOW.
NO MATTER--IT ISSS DONE.
NOTHING THAT BREATHESSS COULD HAVE LASSSTED THISSS LONG...
...NOT EVEN THE...
GONE! BUT WHERE--?!
AND WHAT ISSS THE MEANING OF THISSS HOLE IN THE GROUND?
IF YOU WERE THE ABOMINATION, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TO ASK THAT QUESTION...
...AFTER ALL, IF THIS TRICK WORKED FOR ONE JADE-SKINNED JUGGERNAUT--WHY NOT FOR ANOTHER?
WHY NOT, INDEED?
IT SSSEEMSSS THAT YOU, TOO, ARE A CUNNING FOE, EARTHLING--
--BUT CUNNING ALONE WILL NOT SSSAVE YOU FROM DIABLO!
STOP CALLING HULK AN EARTHLING, SMOKE-THING. HULK IS NOT AN EARTHLING--
--HULK IS HULK!
AND HULK WILL NEVER BE BEATEN!
BY THE BLACK NEBULA, THAT WIND--!
I MUSSST SSSTOP HIM BEFORE HE REALIZESSS WHAT HE ISSS DOING TO ME!

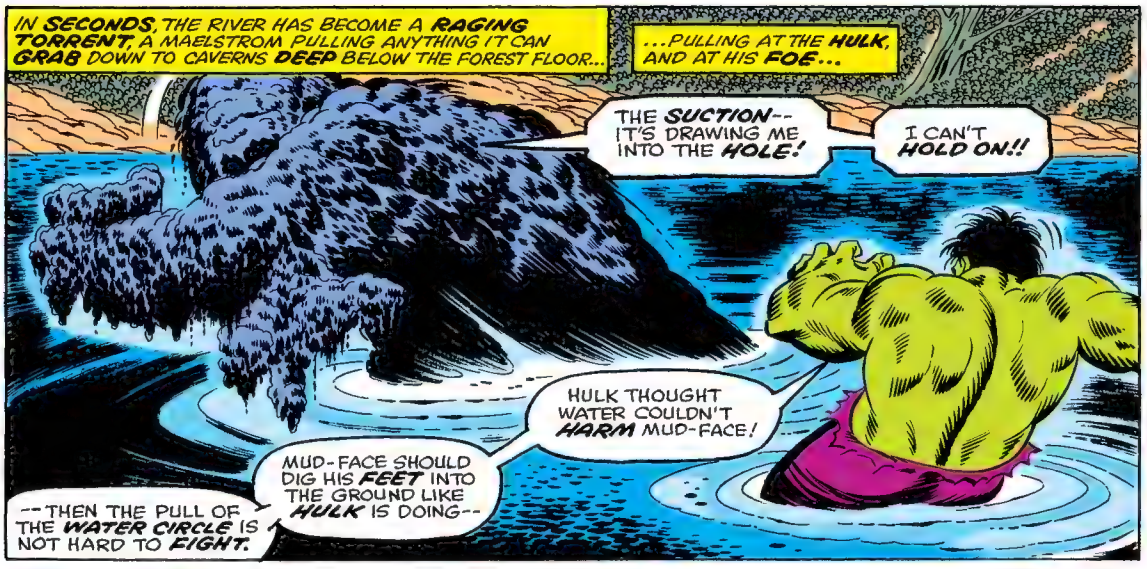
BUT HULK ALREADY KNOWS, SMOKE-THING.
HULK MADE A LITTLE WIND WITH HULK'S MOUTH AND SMOKE-THING WAS AFRAID.
IS SMOKE-THING AFRAID OF HULK'S LITTLE WIND?
YOU INSSSIGNIFICANT GNAT--YOU DARE TO CHALLENGE ONE WHO HASSS DESSSTROYED PLANETSSS? ENTIRE CIVILIZATIONSSS?!
BEWARE--LESSST I CRUSSSH YOU LIKE THE INSSSECT YOU ARE!
SMOKE-THING IS AFRAID--
--HULK CAN HEAR IT IN SMOKE-THING'S VOICE. AND THAT MEANS HULK WAS RIGHT.
FOR ALL THE GOOD IT WILL DO YOU, FOOL--YOUR FISSSTSSS CANNOT HARM ME!
WHO SAYS HULK WILL FIGHT WITH FISTS?!
SLAM!
AGARON'SSS SSSTAR--!
THE IMPACT--THE WIND FORSSSE--IT'SSS TEARING ME APART!
THEN HULK WILL DO IT AGAIN!
AND AGAIN!
NO!!
HULK, SSSTOP! I BEG YOU! YOU'RE DESSSTROYING ME!
HULK DOES NOT CARE!!
THBAMM!
WHEN THE WIND DIES, THERE'S NOTHING LEFT..
...NOT A TREE, A ROCK, A BLADE OF GRASS--A PUFF OF SMOKE--EVERYTHING ABOVE GROUND LEVEL HAS BEEN SCOURED CLEAN BY A BLAST OF AIR SO POWERFUL THAT IT PUTS THE FIERCEST HURRICANES IN HISTORY TO SHAME...

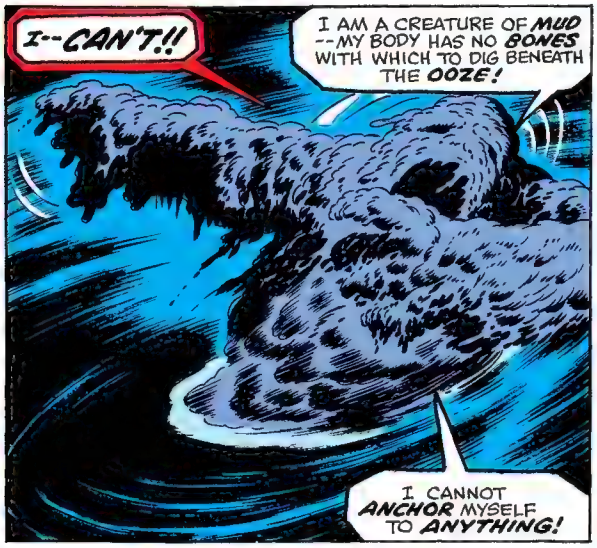

BUT THE HULK COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT THAT. ALL THAT INTERESTS HIM IS DIABLO, FOR THE SMOKE-DEMON IS...
GONE.
HULK HOPES SMOKE-THING IS GONE FOR GOOD.
HULK HAS WON...
...BUT WINNING ONLY MAKES HULK FEEL TIRED.
HULK WILL WALK DOWN STREAM--MAYBE HULK WILL FIND PEACE THERE!
I'M AFRAID NOT, EMERALD ONE.
ALL YOUR QUEST WILL BRING YOU IS ANOTHER FIGHT, AND, PERHAPS, ANOTHER VICTORY...
...BUT, IN THE END, IT IS I WHO'LL BE VICTORIOUS.
AND YOU WHO WILL BE DEAD.
THEN AFTER YOU, YOUR FELLOW DEFENDERS--AND ONCE THEY ARE OUT OF THE WAY--
--THIS WORLD AND ITS PEOPLE ARE MINE FOR THE TAKING!
BUT I HAVE TALKED ENOUGH--THE TIME FOR ACTION IS AT HAND--
SNIKT!
--SO GO, MY SECOND PRETTY, AND DO YOUR WORST.
THE HULK CAN'T WIN THEM ALL.
HE STILL FEELS NO THREAT IN THIS PLACE, STILL CONSIDERS HIMSELF SAFE HERE...
...MORE'S THE PITY.
FOR, IF HE WERE ON GUARD, THE HULK MIGHT HAVE NOTICED THE WATER BEHIND HIM SUDDENLY START BOILING...
...BEFORE IT WAS TOO LATE.
TURN, HULK--!
HUH?!
TURN--AND FACE THE LAST SIGHT YOUR MAMMAL'S EYES WILL EVER SEE!

CHAPTER 3:
AND TABOO SHALL TRIUMPH!
I AM TABOO!
I AM A WARRIOR, SMALL MAMMAL...
...AND I SHALL DESTROY YOU!!
MUD-FACE TALKS SLOW, LIKE HE THINKS HULK IS TOO STUPID TO UNDERSTAND HIS WORDS--!
WELL, HULK IS NOT STUPID, MUD-FACE!
AND HULK WILL NEVER BE DESTROYED!


NOT BY PUNY HUMANS--
--AND NOT BY TALKING MAN OF MUD!!
YOUR RESISTANCE IS... AMUSING, CREATURE OF FLESH...
...BUT IT IS FUTILE.
HOW CAN YOU POSSIBLY HOPE TO HURT ONE WHO IS FORMED OF THE VERY EARTH ITSELF?!
PLOSH!
HULK DOES NOT KNOW--
--BUT HULK WILL KEEP HITTING MUD-FACE UNTIL HULK FINDS OUT!
THEN WE SHALL BOTH BE HERE FOREVER, FOOL...
...AND THAT IS TOO LONG TO WAIT--
--EVEN FOR AN IMMORTAL SUCH AS TABOO!
THEREFORE I SHALL END THIS FARCE QUICKLY-- BY COVERING YOU WITH MUD AS I ONCE COVERED THE EARTHLING EXPLORER, LEWIS CONRAD.*
ONLY YOU, HULK, WILL NOT ESCAPE ALIVE.
GLOOMPH!
*IN WHERE MONSTERS DWELL #2, HONEST -- LEN.
STRUGGLE ALL YOU WISH, MUSCLE-BOUND CLOD, AS MY MUD SHELL SOLIDIFIES AROUND YOU--
--IT WILL ONLY MAKE MY VICTORY THAT MUCH SWEETER.
YOU ARE FINISHED, HULK!
ONCE SOMETHING LIKE A MAN, NOW NO MORE THAN A LIVING STATUE...
...ONE THAT WILL STAND UNTIL THE END OF TIME!

LOOKS LIKE TIME ENDED SOONER THAN YOU'D EXPECTED, TABOO...
YOU LIE, MUD-FACE--!!
NOTHING CAN CAGE THE HULK--NOTHING!!
BTHOK!
IF HULK WILL NOT BE CAGED, THEN HE MUST BE SMASHED--
--TO A PULP!!
BWOP!
HULK DOES NOT UNDERSTAND...!
HULK CANNOT SMASH MUD-FACE, YET MUD-FACE CAN SMASH HULK BACK...
BUT IF MUD-FACE THINKS THAT WILL MAKE HULK GIVE UP--
--MUD-FACE IS WRONG!
HULK WILL NEVER GIVE UP!
IF HULK CANNOT SMASH MUD-FACE WITH FISTS--
--HULK WILL SMASH HIM WITH WATER!
WHICH WILL HURT ME AS MUCH AS YOUR FISTS, EMERALD IDIOT--WHICH IS NOT AT ALL!
HA HA HA HA HA
DO NOT LAUGH AT HULK, MUD-FACE!
IF HULK CANNOT SMASH MUD-FACE WITH FISTS OR WATER, THEN HULK WILL FIND SOMETHING ELSE--
--BECAUSE MUD-FACE HAS MADE HULK MAD--
KRUM!
--AND HULK WILL NOT REST UNTIL MUD-FACE IS SMASHED FOR GOOD!
BY THE GREAT EARTH SPIRIT...
YOUR BLOW--IT'S OPENED A CRACK IN THE RIVERBED--CREATED A WHIRLPOOL--!
YOU CALLED IT, TABOO-BABY...

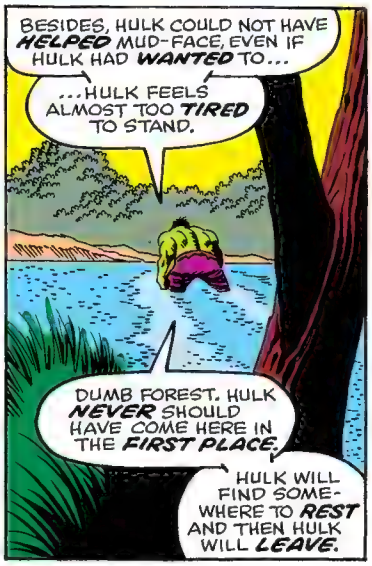

IN SECONDS, THE RIVER HAS BECOME A RAGING TORRENT, A MAELSTROM PULLING ANYTHING IT CAN GRAB DOWN TO CAVERNS DEEP BELOW THE FOREST FLOOR...
...PULLING AT THE HULK, AND AT HIS FOE...
THE SUCTION-- IT'S DRAWING ME INTO THE HOLE!
I CAN'T HOLD ON!!
HULK THOUGHT WATER COULDN'T HARM MUD-FACE!
MUD-FACE SHOULD DIG HIS FEET INTO THE GROUND LIKE HULK IS DOING--
--THEN THE PULL OF THE WATER CIRCLE IS NOT HARD TO FIGHT.


I--CAN'T!!
I AM A CREATURE OF MUD --MY BODY HAS NO BONES WITH WHICH TO DIG BENEATH THE OOZE!
I CANNOT ANCHOR MYSELF TO ANYTHING!

HELP ME, HULK--I BEG OF YOU--
--HELP ME!!
WHY?

...PLEASE...

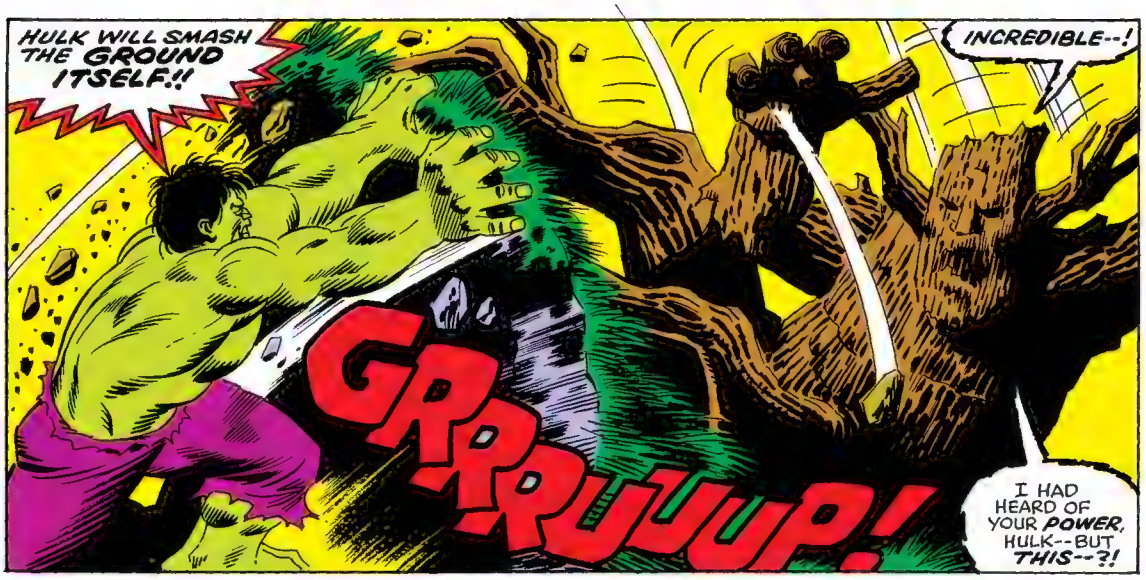
MUD-FACE TRIED TO KILL HULK AND THEN EXPECTS HULK TO SAVE HIS LIFE...?
HULK IS NOT THAT STUPID.

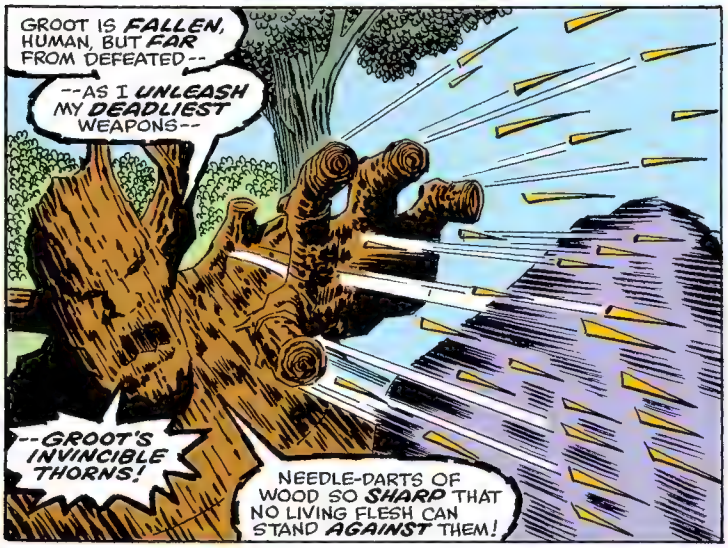

BESIDES, HULK COULD NOT HAVE HELPED MUD-FACE, EVEN IF HULK HAD WANTED TO...
...HULK FEELS ALMOST TOO TIRED TO STAND.
DUMB FOREST. HULK NEVER SHOULD HAVE COME HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE.
HULK WILL FIND SOMEWHERE TO REST AND THEN HULK WILL LEAVE.

TRUTH TO TELL, THERE ARE QUITE A FEW PEOPLE WHO'D BE MORE THAN GLAD TO SEE JUST THAT.
COLONEL JOHN PAUL "HARD-BUTT" HARRISON'S REGIMENT OF THE THIRD ARMORED, FOR EXAMPLE...
...BUT ORDERS ARE ORDERS.
COLONEL HARRISON! RECON PATROLS ARE BACK--
--AN' THEY HAVEN'T FOUND A THING!
THEN SEND 'EM OUT AGAIN, SERGEANT.
BASE SAYS THIS INTERFERENCE IS PLAYING HOB WITH NORAD COMMUNICATIONS...
...LEAVING THE U.S. WIDE OPEN TO AN ENEMY ATTACK.
SO, HULK OR NO HULK, WE'VE GOT TO FIND THE SOURCE OF THAT INTERFERENCE--
--AND DESTROY IT!
HULK FEELS STRANGE IN THIS FOREST.
FIRST SMOKE-THING ATTACKS HULK, THEN MUD-FACE--
--AND HULK ALWAYS FEELS LIKE HULK IS BEING WATCHED.
HULK THINKS FOREST DOESN'T LIKE HU--
URRRRK!!
IT IS TREE!
KRAK!
TREE GRABBED HULK! TREE TRIED TO CHOKE HULK!
MORE TREES--!
HULK WAS RIGHT-- FOREST HATES HULK!
BUT HULK WILL NOT BE BEATEN BY CRAZY TREES-- HULK WILL BREAK FREE AND...
BE SILENT!
HUH?!?
YOU RAIL IN VAIN AT THIS MUCH-ABUSED FOREST, SEEDLING--
--FOR IT IS NOT THE FOREST THAT SEEKS YOUR DEMISE--

CHAPTER 4:
IT IS GROOT, THE MONSTER FROM PLANET X!!
YOU HAVE TROUNCED MY COMPANIONS, MAN-BRUTE--
--BUT YOU WILL FIND ME A FAR MORE DIFFICULT FOE!
TALKING SMOKE-- TALKING MUD-- NOW TALKING TREE!
HULK WONDERS IF THIS IS ALL A DREAM?
HULK DOES NOT LIKE THIS DREAM-- HULK WISHES IT WOULD GO AWAY AND LEAVE HULK ALONE.
GO AWAY, DREAM!
GROOT IS NO DREAM, HUMAN--
HULK IS NO HUMAN-- HULK IS HULK!
NO MATTER. GROOT IS THE MONARCH OF PLANET X, THE OVERLORD OF ALL THE TIMBER IN THE GALAXY!

BAH!
IF SOLDIERS CANNOT HOLD HULK, WHAT MAKES TALKING TREE THINK FOREST CAN DO BETTER?!
HULK STILL DOES NOT WANT TO FIGHT--
--BUT HULK IS TIRED OF BEING HOUNDED, TIRED OF BEING CAGED!
HULK IS TIRED OF MONSTERS TRYING TO KILL HULK FOR NO REASON!
KTHOK!
HULK IS TIRED OF YOU!
IF HULK IS SO TIRED--
--THEN GROOT WILL BE HAPPY TO PUT HULK TO SLEEP-- PERMA-NENTLY!
BADOOM!!
HULK IS CONFUSED.
HULK HIT TALKING TREE AS HARD AS HULK COULD...
...BUT TALKING TREE IS STILL STANDING. TREE EVEN HIT HULK BACK!
PERHAPS HULK IS NOT AS STRONG AS HE THINKS!
OR PERHAPS IT IS THE FACT THAT GROOT HAS ROOTED HIMSELF INTO THE GROUND!
IF TALKING TREE IS PART OF THE GROUND, THEN HULK WILL NOT SMASH TALKING TREE--!

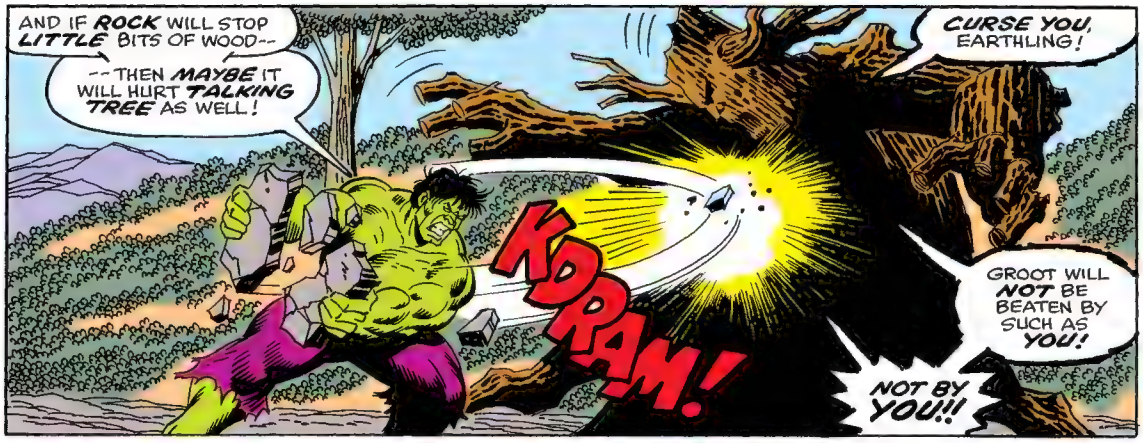

HULK WILL SMASH THE GROUND ITSELF!!
INCREDIBLE--!
GRRRUUUP!
I HAD HEARD OF YOUR POWER, HULK--BUT THIS--?!


GROOT IS FALLEN, HUMAN, BUT FAR FROM DEFEATED--
--AS I UNLEASH MY DEADLIEST WEAPONS--
--GROOT'S INVINCIBLE THORNS!
NEEDLE-DARTS OF WOOD SO SHARP THAT NO LIVING FLESH CAN STAND AGAINST THEM!

MOMENTS: ONE TO FIRE THE THORNS...
...A SECOND FOR THE HULK TO SEE THEM COMING... A THIRD TO DEAL WITH THEM...
IF NOTHING LIVING CAN STAND AGAINST LITTLE BITS OF WOOD...

...THEN HULK WILL FIGHT THEM WITH SOMETHING THAT DOES NOT LIVE.
HULK WILL FIGHT THEM WITH ROCK!

HAH!
WHAT GOOD ARE LITTLE BITS OF WOOD NOW, TALKING TREE?
BAKABAKABAK

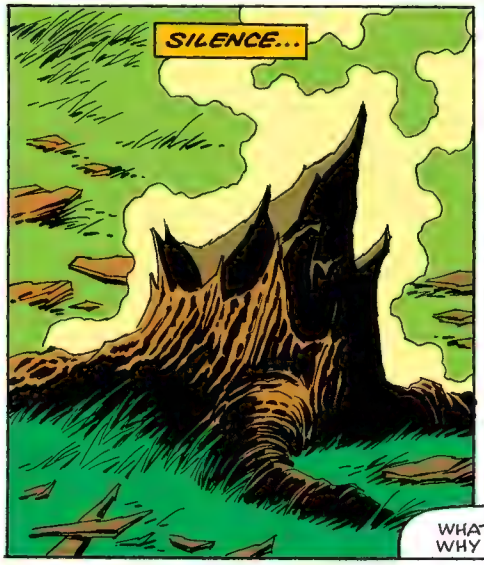

AND IF ROCK WILL STOP LITTLE BITS OF WOOD--
--THEN MAYBE IT WILL HURT TALKING TREE AS WELL!
CURSE YOU, EARTHLING!
KORAM!
GROOT WILL NOT BE BEATEN BY SUCH AS YOU!
NOT BY YOU!!

IT'S NOT AS THOUGH YOU HAVE A CHOICE, GROOT.
HULK TOLD TALKING TREE HULK DIDN'T WANT TO FIGHT--
--BUT TALKING TREE DID NOT LISTEN!

LIKE SOLDIERS, TALKING TREE ONLY WANTED TO BEAT HULK!
WELL, HULK BEAT SOLDIERS, AND HULK BEAT MONSTERS--

--AND NOW, HULK WILL BEAT TALKING TREE!
AND WHEN HULK HAS BEATEN EVERYTHING...
NOTHING WILL EVER BOTHER HULK AGAIN.

DOES TALKING TREE UNDERSTAND WHAT HULK IS S SAYING?!
DOES HE--!?!

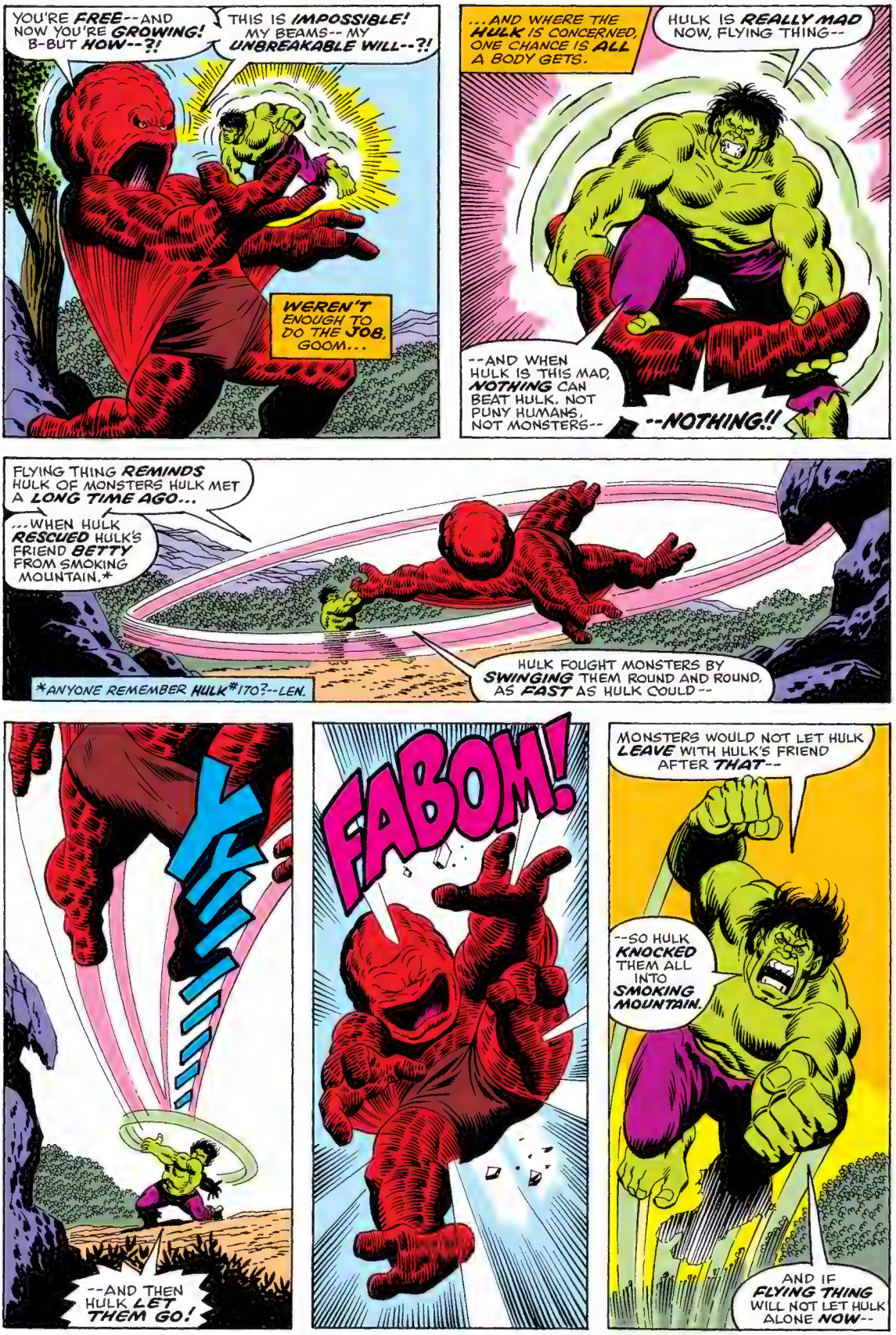

SILENCE...

HULK THINKS TALKING TREE IS GONE FOR GOOD...
...BUT HULK FEELS...SO TIRED...
WHAT IS HAPPENING TO HULK? WHY DOES HULK FEEL SO...WEAK...?

HULK DOES NOT LIKE THIS FOREST ANYMORE--
--HULK WILL LEAVE IT NOW AND GO SOMEWHERE ELSE WHERE THERE ARE NO SOLDIERS AND NO TREES-THAT-TALK...
THOOM!
THOOM!
THOOM!
BUT HULK STILL FEELS TIRED... WEAK...
HULK CANNOT EVEN LEAP LIKE HULK SHOULD.
THE HULK'S BEEN THINKING A LOT THIS DAY--MUCH MORE THAN HE USUALLY DOES--AND BEING THUS PREOCCUPIED...
...HE IS SOMEWHAT VULNERABLE.
SHABOM!
OH WELL, HERE WE GO AGAIN...
...AND THIS NEXT STOP IS DEFINITELY NOT GREENWICH VILLAGE.
BHRAM!
IT REALLY HAS BEEN ONE OF THOSE DAYS, HASN'T IT, HULK? AND IT'S GETTING WORSE...
SOMETHING... HIT HULK...
...KNOCKED HULK OUT OF THE SKY.
HULK THINKS IT IS ANOTHER DUMB MONSTER.
NOT A "DUMB MONSTER," GREEN ONE--
--BUT THE FIERCEST BEING IN ALL CREATION!
HULK KNEW IT--
--IT IS ANOTHER DUMB MONSTER.

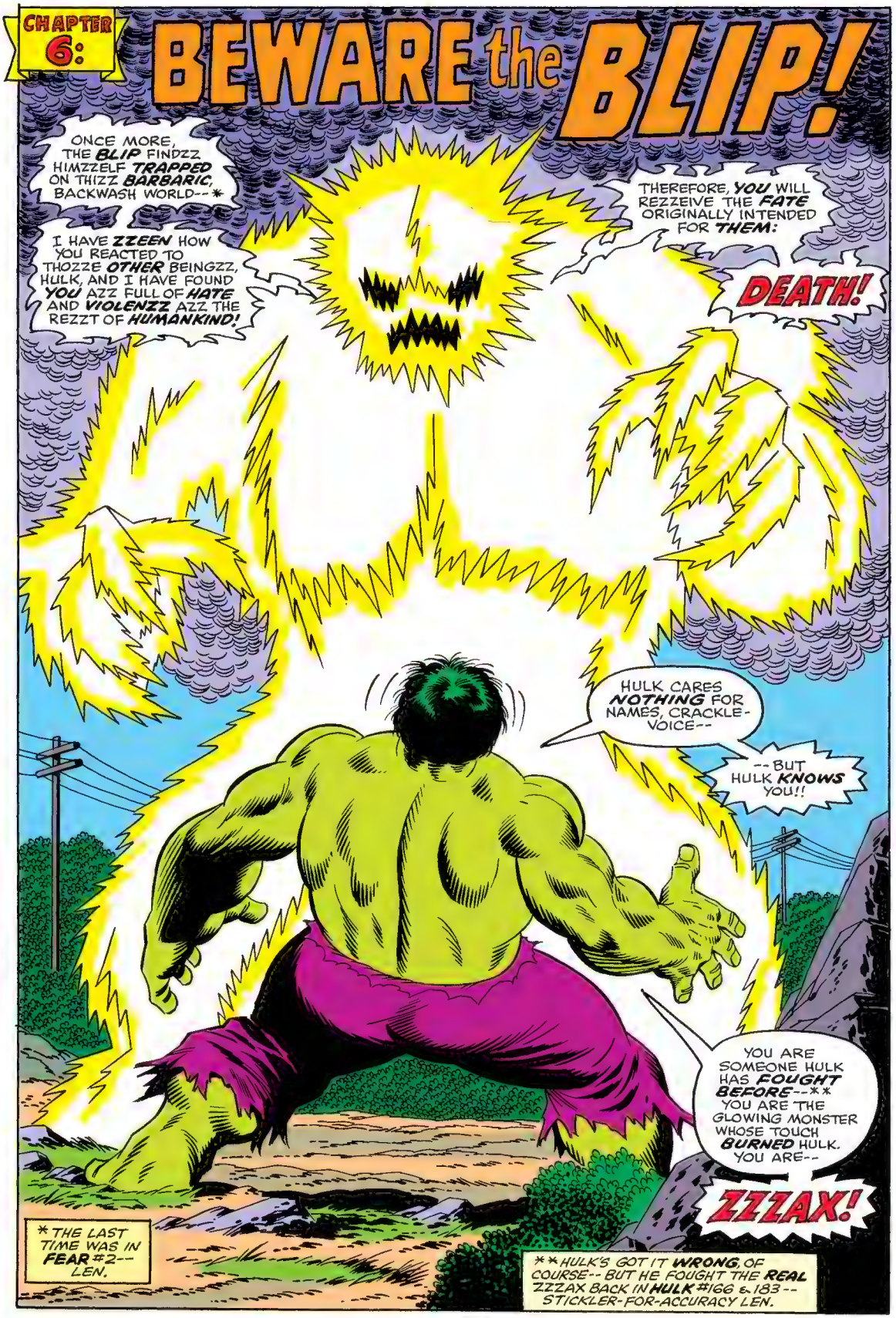
CHAPTER 5:
SILENCE, YOU INSIGNIFICANT HUMAN FLEA--
--FOR I AM GOOM!!
AND I AM POWER PERSONI-FIED!!
ONCE BEFORE I CAME TO ENSLAVE THIS BACKWARD PLANET--TO HAVE ITS WEAK AND HELPLESS PEOPLE SERVE ME FOR ALL TIME!*
MY DREAM WAS THWARTED THEN, BUT NOW I HAVE RETURNED, STRONGER AND DEADLIER THAN EVER!
AND TO SHOW THIS PITIFULLY DEFENSELESS HUMANITY JUST HOW DEADLY GOOM CAN BE, I WILL GIVE THEM AN EXAMPLE--
--BY DESTROYING THE MINDLESS RAMPAGING HULK!!
*WAY BACK IN TALES OF SUSPENSE #15, WE KID YOU NOT. --LIVELY LEN.

HULK IS SICK OF MONSTERS TRYING TO KILL HULK FOR NO REASON--
--AND HULK IS SICK OF MONSTERS CALLING HULK NAMES!
SO STOP BOTHERING HULK, FLYING THING--
--OR HULK WILL SMASH!
WHAT WILL YOU SMASH, YOU GREEN GARGOYLE--?
A PEBBLE ON A BEACH? AN ANT?
BECAUSE WHEN MY MOLECULAR CONDENSER BEAMS STRIKE YOU, MONSTROSITY--
--THOSE WILL BE THE ONLY THINGS SMALL ENOUGH FOR YOU TO FIGHT!
ZWIP!
HULK IS SHRINKING!
AN ASTUTE OBSERVATION, TINY ONE.
AND SO LONG AS THE POWER OF MY WILL REMAINS UNBROKEN, YOU WILL REMAIN THE SIZE OF AN EARTHLY MOUSE--
--PERHAPS FOR ALL TIME!
BUT GOOM IS NOTHING IF NOT MERCIFUL, HULK.
I WILL CRUSH YOU IN MY HAND--A QUICK DEATH--
--RATHER THAN LET YOU SUFFER.
FAREWELL, HUL-- EH?!!
POP!
IT IS NOT HULK WHO WILL SUFFER, FLYING THING--!
BECAUSE EVEN WHEN HULK IS TINY--
--HULK WILL NEVER GIVE UP!
BOP!

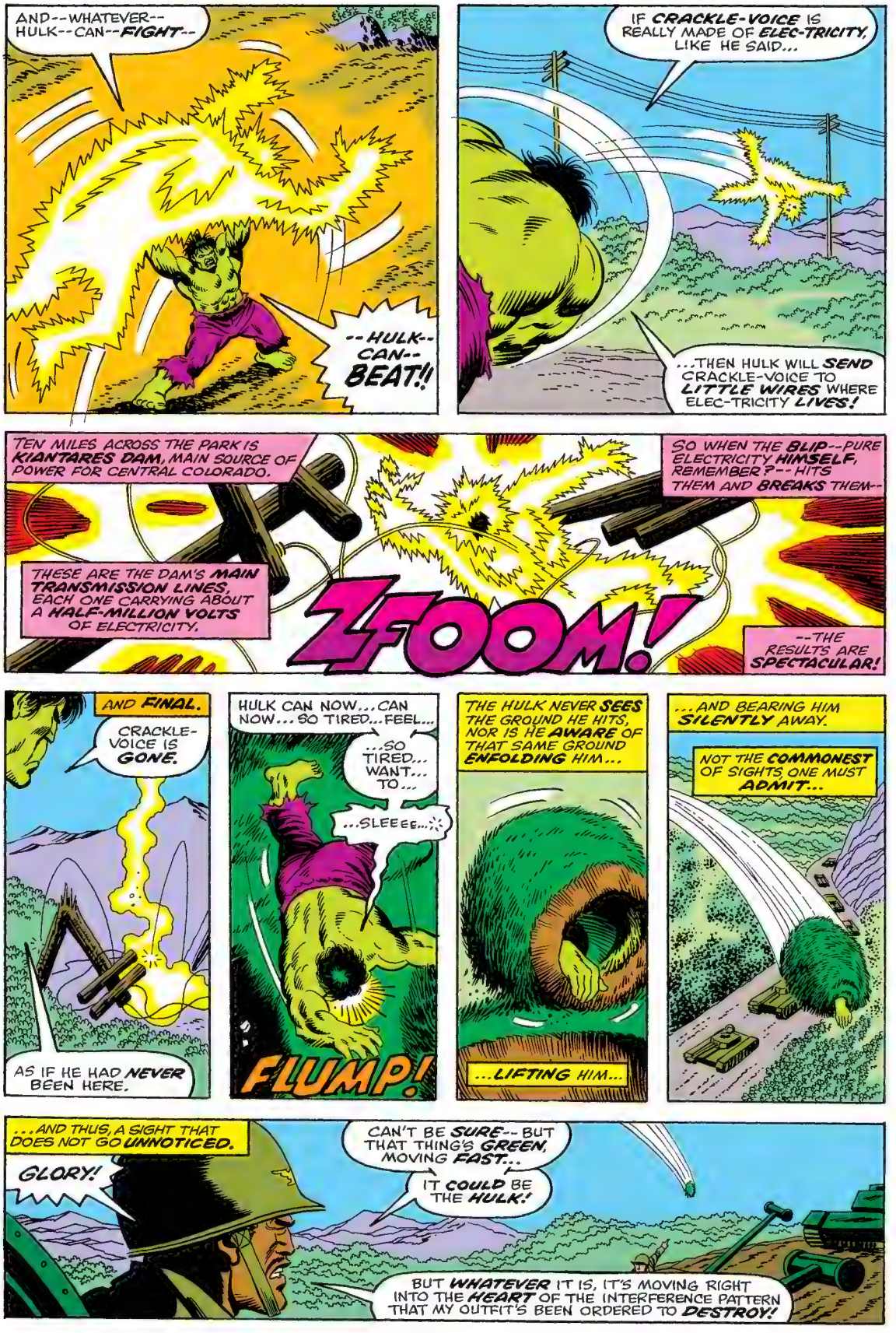

YOU'RE FREE--AND NOW YOU'RE GROWING! B-BUT HOW--?!
THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE! MY BEAMS-- MY UNBREAKABLE WILL--?!
WEREN'T ENOUGH TO DO THE JOB, GOOM...
...AND WHERE THE HULK IS CONCERNED, ONE CHANCE IS ALL A BODY GETS.
HULK IS REALLY MAD NOW, FLYING THING--
--AND WHEN HULK IS THIS MAD, NOTHING CAN BEAT HULK. NOT PUNY HUMANS, NOT MONSTERS--
--NOTHING!!
FLYING THING REMINDS HULK OF MONSTERS HULK MET A LONG TIME AGO...
...WHEN HULK RESCUED HULK'S FRIEND BETTY FROM SMOKING MOUNTAIN.*
*ANYONE REMEMBER HULK*170?--LEN.
HULK FOUGHT MONSTERS BY SWINGING THEM ROUND AND ROUND, AS FAST AS HULK COULD--
YYYYYYYY
--AND THEN HULK LET THEM GO!
FABOOM!
MONSTERS WOULD NOT LET HULK LEAVE WITH HULK'S FRIEND AFTER THAT--
--SO HULK KNOCKED THEM ALL INTO SMOKING MOUNTAIN.
AND IF FLYING THING WILL NOT LET HULK ALONE NOW--

HULK WILL DO THE SAME TO HIM!!
ANIMAL FOOL! GOOM'S POWER IS MORE THAN YOURS COULD EVER HOPE TO BE!
GOOM IS INVINCIBLE! GOOM IS--
--IN A LOT OF TROUBLE.
BECAUSE THE HULK WASN'T KIDDING. MONTHS AGO, ON A LONELY PACIFIC ISLAND, HE BROUGHT A VOLCANIC MOUNTAIN DOWN ON A MOB OF ALIEN MONSTERS.
NO--OH NO!!
...AND HERE IN THE REMOTE FASTNESS OF THE COLORADO ROCKIES...
BARABOOM!
...HE'S JUST DONE IT AGAIN!
FOR THE LONGEST TIME, NOTHING STIRS.
THEN...
SHAKOW!
HULK IS... FREE...
BUT WHERE IS HULK... WHAT... HAPPENED...?
HULK... REMEMBERS NOW...
MOUNTAIN FELL ON HULK AND FLYING THING!
HULK FEELS SO TIRED, HULK CAN HARDLY THINK...
...CAN HARDLY... WALK...
WHAT IS... HAPPENING TO HULK?

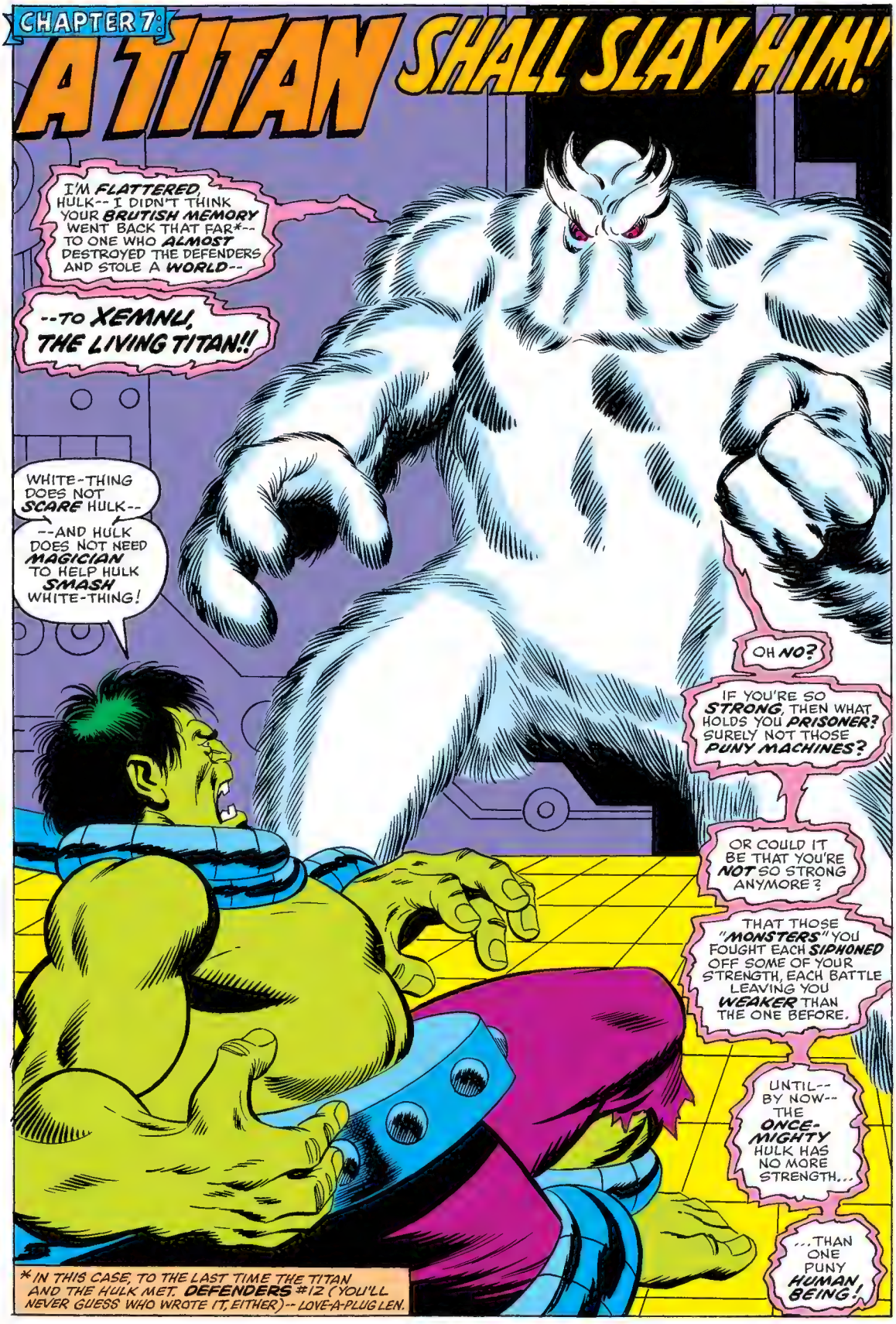
WHAT IS HAPPENING TO FOREST?
FIRST AIR IS HOT, NOW IT IS COLD-- BEFORE, HULK COULD SEE THE SUN... NOW THE SUN HAS GONE AWAY...
HULK WISHES AIR AND SUN WOULD MAKE UP THEIR MINDS...
OH. NOW HULK UNDERSTANDS.
SUN HAS GONE AWAY TO LET WATER-FROM-SKY FALL ON THE EARTH.
NOW EVERY-THING WILL GET WET.
HULK WILL GET WET.
GO AWAY, CLOUDS-- HULK WANTS SUN BACK!
GO AWAY!
USUALLY, WHEN THE HULK-- OR ANY OF US, FOR THAT MATTER-- YELLS AT THE SKY, WE GET NO ANSWER.
THIS TIME HE DOES.
AND HE WISHES HE'D KEPT HIS MOUTH SHUT.
KRAK!
AARRGH!
A SECOND BOLT, STRONGER THAN THE FIRST...
...TRIGGERING PAIN SO GREAT THAT THE HULK CAN'T EVEN CRY OUT!.
ALL HE CAN DO IS ENDURE...
...AND HOPE THAT SOONER OR LATER, THE TORMENT WILL END.
SURPRISINGLY ENOUGH, THAT WISH, TOO, IS GRANTED.
ZZA-KOW!
HUH--!?!
LIGHTNING ISN'T SO SMART AFTER ALL.
HULK COULD NOT MOVE BUT LIGHTNING MISSED HULK ANYWAY.
HULK DOES NOT LIKE THIS PLACE-- HULK WILL LEAVE.
NO, ORGANIC ONE--
--YOU WILL NOT!

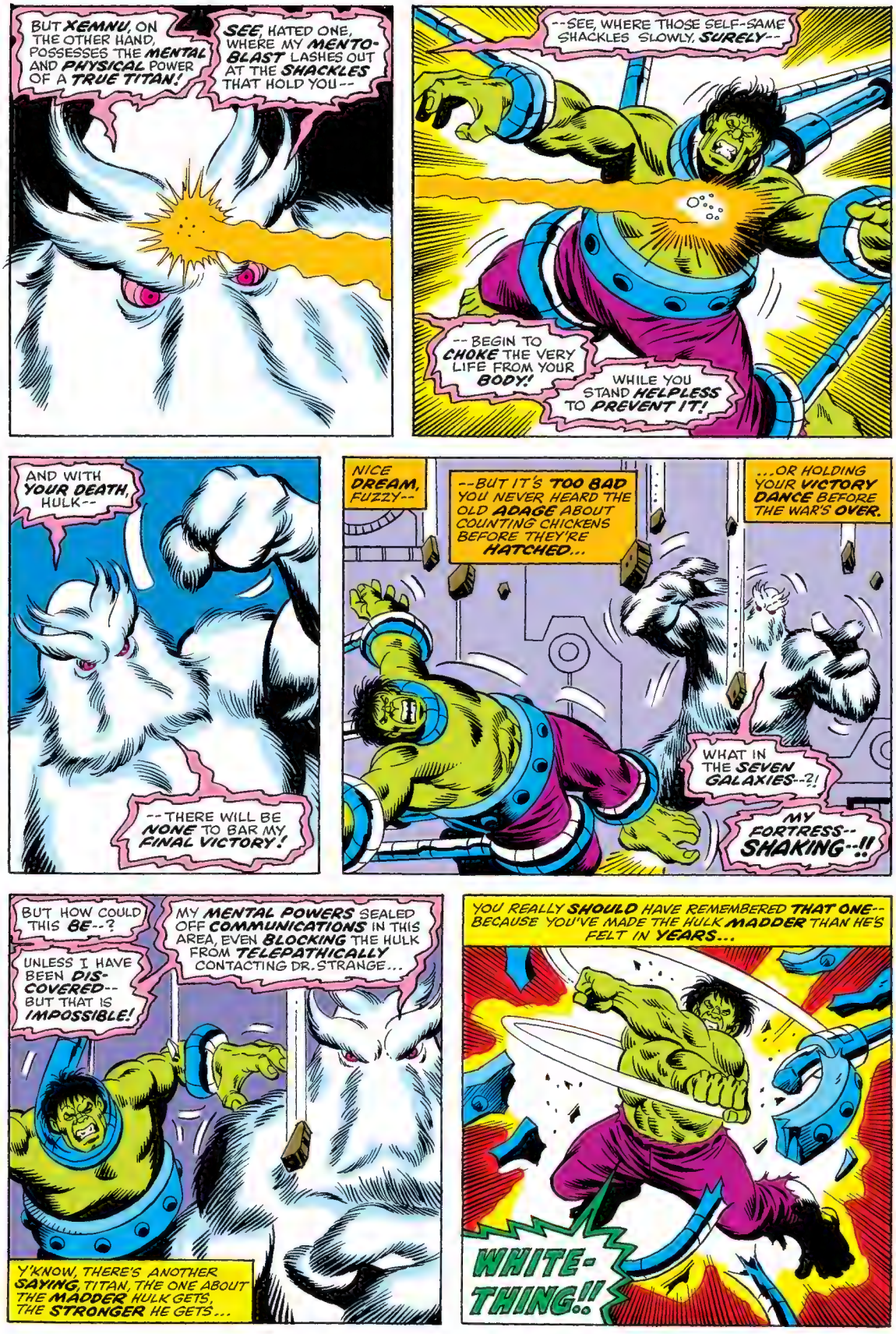

CHAPTER 6:
BEWARE the BLIP!
ONCE MORE, THE BLIP FINDZZ HIMZZELF TRAPPED ON THIZZ BARBARIC, BACKWASH WORLD--*
I HAVE ZZEEN HOW YOU REACTED TO THOZZE OTHER BEINGZZ, HULK, AND I HAVE FOUND YOU AZZ FULL OF HATE AND VIOLENZZ AZZ THE REZZT OF HUMANKIND!
THEREFORE, YOU WILL REZZEIVE THE FATE ORIGINALLY INTENDED FOR THEM:
DEATH!
HULK CARES NOTHING FOR NAMES, CRACKLE-VOICE--
--BUT HULK KNOWS YOU!!
YOU ARE SOMEONE HULK HAS FOUGHT BEFORE--** YOU ARE THE GLOWING MONSTER WHOSE TOUCH BURNED HULK. YOU ARE--
ZZZAX!
* THE LAST TIME WAS IN FEAR #2-- LEN.
** HULK'S GOT IT WRONG, OF COURSE-- BUT HE FOUGHT THE REAL ZZZAX BACK IN HULK #166 & 183-- STICKLER-FOR-ACCURACY LEN.

YOU TALK LIKE ONE DEMENTED, CREATURE--
--THE BLIP NEVER ZZAW YOU BEFORE NOW.
ZOT!
AND WHEN THIZZ BATTLE IZZ DONE--
--I WILL NEVER ZZEE YOU AGAIN!
CRACKLE-VOICE HITS HULK WITH FIRE--
--AND FIRE BURNS, JUST LIKE WHEN HULK FOUGHT HIM LAST TIME.
STOP BURNING HULK, CRACKLE-VOICE!
INCREDIBLE!
THOSE BLAZZTZZ WOULD HAVE INZZINERATED A ZZITY, YET THE HULK MERELY ZZHRUGZZ THEM OFF.
HE EVEN ZZEEKZZ TO ZZTRIKE ME!
I WILL NOT TRY TO ZZTOP HIM--
--LET HIM LEARN THE ERROR OF HIS ACTIONZZ THE HARD WAY.
YAAARRR--!!
THE BLIP IZZ PURE ELECTRICAL ENERGY, HULK. MY BODY CONTAINZZ THE POWER OF BILLIONZZ OF MEGAVOLTZZ.
BY TOUCHING ME, YOU HAVE MERELY ELECTROCUTED YOURZZELF.
ZAM!
NO! HULK--IZZ--ONLY--BEATEN--IF--HULK--GIVEZZ--UP--!
ZZO--LONG--AZZ--HULK--HOLDZZ--ON--TO--CRACKLE--VOICE--
--HULK--CAN--FIGHT--HIM!


AND--WHATEVER--HULK--CAN--FIGHT--
--HULK--CAN--BEAT!!
IF CRACKLE-VOICE IS REALLY MADE OF ELEC-TRICITY, LIKE HE SAID...
...THEN HULK WILL SEND CRACKLE-VOICE TO LITTLE WIRES WHERE ELEC-TRICITY LIVES!
TEN MILES ACROSS THE PARK IS KIANTARES DAM, MAIN SOURCE OF POWER FOR CENTRAL COLORADO.
THESE ARE THE DAM'S MAIN TRANSMISSION LINES, EACH ONE CARRYING ABOUT A HALF-MILLION VOLTS OF ELECTRICITY.
ZOOM!
SO WHEN THE BLIP--PURE ELECTRICITY HIMSELF, REMEMBER?--HITS THEM AND BREAKS THEM--
--THE RESULTS ARE SPECTACULAR!
AND FINAL.
CRACKLE-VOICE IS GONE.
AS IF HE HAD NEVER BEEN HERE.
HULK CAN NOW...CAN NOW...SO TIRED...FEEL...
...SO TIRED... WANT... TO...
...SLEEEE...
FLUMP!
THE HULK NEVER SEES THE GROUND HE HITS, NOR IS HE AWARE OF THAT SAME GROUND ENFOLDING HIM...
...LIFTING HIM...
...AND BEARING HIM SILENTLY AWAY.
NOT THE COMMONEST OF SIGHTS ONE MUST ADMIT...
...AND THUS, A SIGHT THAT DOES NOT GO UNNOTICED.
GLORY!
CAN'T BE SURE--BUT THAT THING'S GREEN, MOVING FAST...
IT COULD BE THE HULK!
BUT WHATEVER IT IS, IT'S MOVING RIGHT INTO THE HEART OF THE INTERFERENCE PATTERN THAT MY OUTFIT'S BEEN ORDERED TO DESTROY!

WELCOME TO THE "HEART" OF THE INTERPERENCE, HULK--
--NOT A GENTLE WELCOME AT ALL.
BUT THEN, WE DID SAY THIS DAY WAS GOING TO GET WORSE.
THOUGH THE HULK HAS OTHER IDEAS...
GROUND HAS TURNED AGAINST HULK, TOO--?!
LET HULK GO, GROUND! LET HULK GO--NOW!
FWAM!
NOTHING ABOUT YOU HAS CHANGED, I SEE, MAN-BRUTE.
YOU ARE STILL AS BELLIGERENT AS EVER.
ANOTHER VOICE-- BUT THIS IS ONE THAT HULK KNOWS...
DO YOU, HULK?
YOU'VE FOUGHT SO MUCH, TODAY--COULD IT BE THAT YOU'RE JUST CONFUSED? TIRED?
HULK IS TIRED...
...BUT NOT THAT TIRED. AND IF VOICE DOES NOT LET HULK GO--
--HULK WILL MAKE VOICE REGRET IT!
YOUR MOVE THEN, HULK.
BECAUSE I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU GO. NOT WHILE YOU'RE ALIVE, AT ANY RATE.
CHOOK!
WALLS--MACHINES--THEY ARE ALIVE!
GRABBING HULK--CHOKING HULK!
AND HOLDING YOU THEIR HELPLESS PRISONER.
THEIRS--AND MINE!
HULK WILL BREAK FREE AND THEN VOICE WILL BE SORRY!
GIVEN THE TIME, I'M QUITE SURE YOU WOULD, OLD ENEMY--
--BUT I'M NOT GOING TO GIVE YOU THAT TIME.
I AM GOING TO SUCCEED WHERE MY CONSTRUCTS FAILED.
I AM GOING TO KILL YOU, HULK.
YOU--!!
WHITE-THING!!


CHAPTER 7:
A TITAN SHALL SLAY HIM!
I'M FLATTERED, HULK-- I DIDN'T THINK YOUR BRUTISH MEMORY WENT BACK THAT FAR*-- TO ONE WHO ALMOST DESTROYED THE DEFENDERS AND STOLE A WORLD--
--TO XEMNU, THE LIVING TITAN!!
WHITE-THING DOES NOT SCARE HULK--
--AND HULK DOES NOT NEED MAGICIAN TO HELP HULK SMASH WHITE-THING!
OH NO?
IF YOU'RE SO STRONG, THEN WHAT HOLDS YOU PRISONER? SURELY NOT THOSE PUNY MACHINES?
OR COULD IT BE THAT YOU'RE NOT SO STRONG ANYMORE?
THAT THOSE "MONSTERS" YOU FOUGHT EACH SIPHONED OFF SOME OF YOUR STRENGTH, EACH BATTLE LEAVING YOU WEAKER THAN THE ONE BEFORE.
UNTIL-- BY NOW-- THE ONCE-MIGHTY HULK HAS NO MORE STRENGTH...
...THAN ONE PUNY HUMAN BEING!
*IN THIS CASE, TO THE LAST TIME THE TITAN AND THE HULK MET. DEFENDERS #12 (YOU'LL NEVER GUESS WHO WROTE IT, EITHER)-- LOVE-A-PLUG LEN.


BUT XEMNU, ON THE OTHER HAND, POSSESSES THE MENTAL AND PHYSICAL POWER OF A TRUE TITAN!
SEE, HATED ONE, WHERE MY MENTO-BLAST LASHES OUT AT THE SHACKLES THAT HOLD YOU--
--SEE, WHERE THOSE SELF-SAME SHACKLES SLOWLY, SURELY--
-- BEGIN TO CHOKE THE VERY LIFE FROM YOUR BODY!
WHILE YOU STAND HELPLESS TO PREVENT IT!
AND WITH YOUR DEATH, HULK--
--THERE WILL BE NONE TO BAR MY FINAL VICTORY!
NICE DREAM, FUZZY--
--BUT IT'S TOO BAD YOU NEVER HEARD THE OLD ADAGE ABOUT COUNTING CHICKENS BEFORE THEY'RE HATCHED...
...OR HOLDING YOUR VICTORY DANCE BEFORE THE WAR'S OVER.
WHAT IN THE SEVEN GALAXIES--?!
MY FORTRESS-- SHAKING--!!
BUT HOW COULD THIS BE--?
UNLESS I HAVE BEEN DIS-COVERED-- BUT THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE!
MY MENTAL POWERS SEALED OFF COMMUNICATIONS IN THIS AREA, EVEN BLOCKING THE HULK FROM TELEPATHICALLY CONTACTING DR. STRANGE...
Y'KNOW, THERE'S ANOTHER SAYING, TITAN, THE ONE ABOUT THE MADDER HULK GETS, THE STRONGER HE GETS...
YOU REALLY SHOULD HAVE REMEMBERED THAT ONE-- BECAUSE YOU'VE MADE THE HULK MADDER THAN HE'S FELT IN YEARS...
WHITE-THING!!

TRIGON'S BONES! THE MAN-BRUTE IS FREE!
HULK IS NOT TIRED ANYMORE, WHITE-THING-- HULK IS MAD!
HULK IS MAD AT YOU!!
AND HULK IS COMING TO SMASH-- EH?!!
YOU'RE NOT, YOU KNOW, CRETIN.
FOR ONLY A FOOL BATTLES TWO FOES AT ONCE...
...AND XEMNU HAS NEVER PLAYED THE FOOL.
FAREWELL, HULK!
WHEN MY OTHER FOE-- WHOEVER HE IS--DESTROYS THIS COMPLEX--
--I ONLY HOPE THAT YOU'RE INSIDE TO SEE IT HAPPEN!
WHITE-THING THINKS HE CAN ESCAPE HULK BY FLYING AWAY IN BIG BUBBLE--
--BUT WHITE-THING IS WRONG!
MAYBE HULK CAN'T FLY LIKE BUBBLE--
--BUT HULK CAN STILL LEAP!
SKRUNCH!
AND HULK CAN STILL GRAB--LIKE THIS!!
PERSISTENT FOOL--DOES THIS MEAN YOU'VE LEARNED TO BREATHE UNDERWATER?
MY ATMOS-SPHERE WILL KEEP ME SAFE, HULK--
--BUT WHAT WILL PROTECT YOU?
WHITE-THING MUST THINK HULK CAN BE TRICKED INTO OPENING HULK'S MOUTH...
...BUT HULK WILL NOT DO THAT! WHY SHOULD HULK?
HULK DOES NOT WANT TO LET WATER IN. HULK WILL WAIT UNTIL HULK FINDS THE AIR.

REMEMBER THAT DAM WE TOLD YOU ABOUT...?
WELL, THIS ISN'T IT--THIS IS A FLOOD CONTROL DAM WAY OUT IN THE FORT CARSON BOONDOCKS...
...AND RIGHT NOW, IT'S SEEING MORE ACTION THAN IT'S SEEN SINCE IT WAS BUILT.
COLONEL HARRISON, IT'S CONFIRMED!
SOMETHING BENEATH THIS DAM IS THE SOURCE OF THE RADIO INTERFERENCE!
LOOKS LIKE MY HUNCH WAS RIGHT, COLTRANE.
SO LET'S KEEP LAYING CHARGES ALONG THE RIVERBED UNTIL WE GET A REACTION!
YOU HEARD THE COLONEL, YOU CLOWNS--
VOOMP!
--FIRE!
THE REACTION ISN'T LONG IN COMING...
COLONEL, IT'S THE HULK!
I CAN SEE THAT, COLTRANE--
--BUT WHAT IN BLAZES IS THAT THING WITH HIM?!
SWOOSH!
STILL WITH ME, HULK?
VERY WELL--I'LL SEE IF EVEN YOU CAN SURVIVE THE VACUUM OF OUTER SPACE!
HULK IS NOT GOING TO SPACE--
--HULK IS GOING TO THE GROUND!
AND WHITE-THING IS GOING WITH HULK!
BARAK!
A MERE FALL CANNOT HARM THE LIVING TITAN, HULK.
MY MENTAL POWERS WILL SLOW MY DESCENT.
AND THOUGH THIS BATTLE HAS DRAINED ME SOME...

...I AM FRESH, STILL AT THE PEAK OF MY STRENGTH, WHILE YOU ARE WEARY--
--FIGHTING WITH THE LAST DREGS OF YOURS.
YOU CANNOT WIN, HULK.
IF WHITE-THING BELIEVES THAT, THEN WHITE-THING DOES NOT KNOW HULK!
HULK CAN NEVER BE BEATEN!
AND WHEN HULK IS THRU WITH WHITE-THING--
--HULK WILL MAKE WHITE-THING GO AWAY SO FAR THAT HE WILL NEVER BOTHER HULK AGAIN!
WORDS, BRUTE, MERE WORDS.
THEY MEAN NOTHING COMPARED TO THE WORLD-SHAKING POWER OF XEMNU'S MENTO-BLASTS!
AND YET, DESPITE ALL THE BLASTS, THE HULK KEEPS ON COMING.
HE MIGHT EVEN HAVE REACHED XEMNU...
...HAD A CERTAIN CHARGE NOT REACHED A CERTAIN DEPTH RIGHT OVER A CERTAIN HIDDEN LAB...
...AND THEN EXPLODED!
FBOOM!
GOOD LORD--THAT BLAST CRACKED THE DAM FACE!
EVERYBODY OFF THE DAM--NOW!!
ALL OF YOU, RUN FOR YOUR LIVES--
--THE DAM'S GOING TO GIVE WAY!!
LET GO OF MY ARM, CRETIN--THE DAM!
NO, WHITE-THING--!
HULK WILL KEEP YOU HERE UNTIL THE FIGHT IS OVER--
--AND HULK HAS BEATEN YOU FOR THE LAST TIME!

BOTH MAY HAPPEN SOONER THAN YOU THINK, HULK...
BSHROOM!
IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE MUCH, THIS NO-NAME DAM, BUT IT HOLDS BACK A LAKE FOUR MILES LONG BY TWO WIDE BY A QUARTER-MILE DEEP--TWO CUBIC MILES OF WATER...
... ALL OF WHICH SUDDENLY LETS GO AT ONCE!
IT'S A FORCE NOT EVEN THE HULK CAN STAND AGAINST.
THE INTERFERENCE IS GONE, COLONEL--ALL FREQUENCIES ARE OPEN.
GOOD.
RADIO DOWN-STREAM--ALERT THEM TO THE FLOOD.
IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT IT'LL HAVE TO DO.
AS FOR THE HULK...?
TELL H.Q. I DON'T THINK HE SURVIVED.
NOTHING LIVING COULD HAVE SURVIVED THAT!
AFTER AN HOUR OR SO, THE FLOOD CRESTS AND THE WATER BEGINS TO RECEDE...
...LEAVING THE LAND IN ITS WAKE BATTERED... DESOLATE...
BUT EVEN IN THIS MADCAP MESS, SOME THINGS DO SURVIVE...
AIR!!
HULK HAS FOUND AIR AGAIN--HULK CAN BREATHE!
BUT WHERE IS WHITE-THING?! HULK LOST SIGHT OF HIM IN THE WATER.
HULK WANTS TO FINISH FIGHT FOR GOOD!
HUNH--! WHITE-THING IS NOT HERE.
ONLY HULK SURVIVED THE ANGRY WATER.
SO WHEN WHITE-THING SAID HE WAS STRONGER THAN HULK--
--WHITE-THING LIED!
HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!
FIN!

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THE INCREDIBLE HULK®
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EVEN IF YOU BREAK FREE, BRUTE--YOU STILL HAVE TO FACE DOC SAMSON!
BUCKLER+GIANTA
...AND SHIELD SHALL FOLLOW!

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

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"...and SHIELD shall follow!"

IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS, THE ONCE-PLACID TOWN OF CITRUSVILLE, FLORIDA HAS RELUCTANTLY PLAYED HOST TO A MOST BIZARRE ASSORTMENT OF UNEXPECTED VISITORS: THE MAD VIKING, THE MAN-CHILD CALLED WUNDARR, THE SATANIC NETHER-SPAWN, NOT TO MENTION THE MACABRE MAN-THING!*

SO YOU'D THINK BY NOW THE LOCAL POPULACE WOULD HAVE BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF UNINVITED GUESTS IN THEIR NORMALLY-SLEEPY MIDST--

--BUT, BOY, WOULD YOU BE WRONG!

C'MON, FELLA--COME ON DOWN FROM THERE BEFORE YOU HURT YOURSELF!

GO AWAY, HUMANS--GO AWAY!

LEAVE HULK ALONE--OR HULK WILL SMASH!

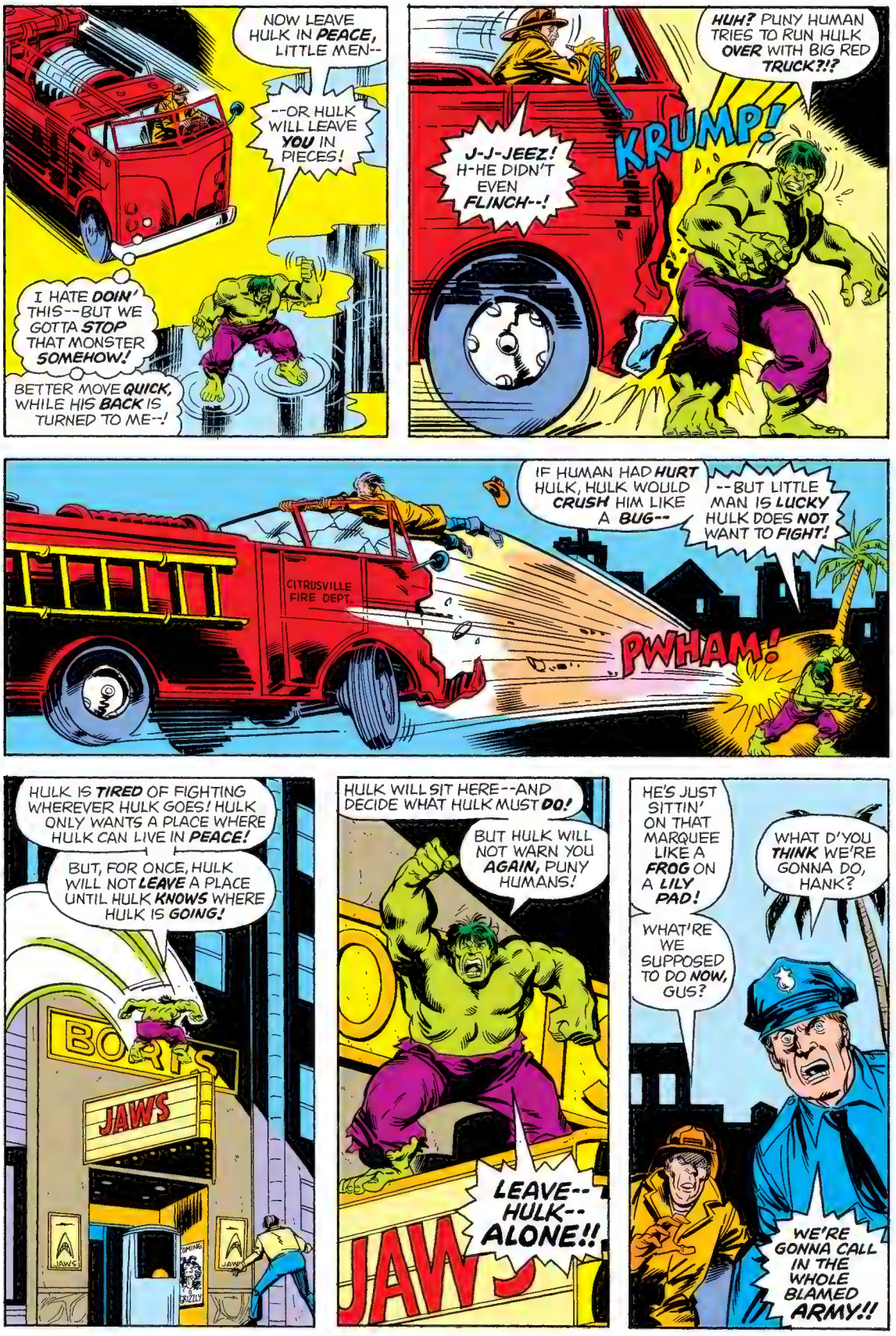
HURRY UP, HUGO--YOU'RE GONNA MISS IT!

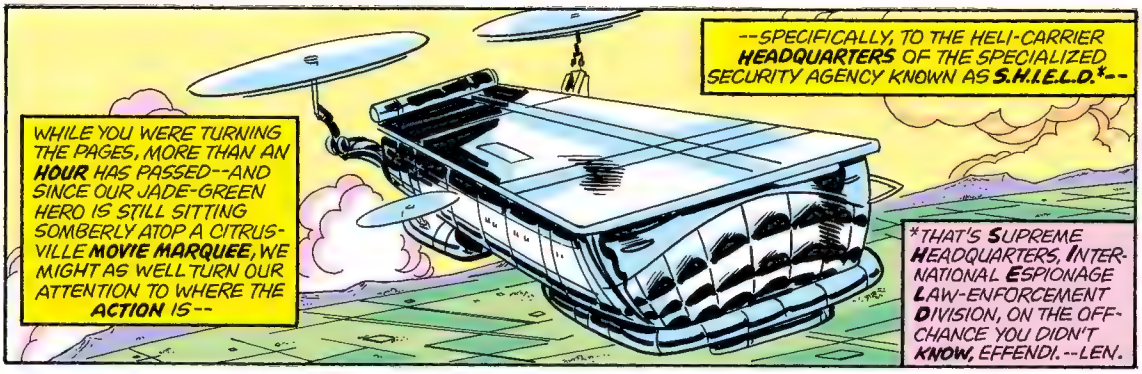
THE HULK HIMSELF IS RIGHT IN THE CENTER OF TOWN... YEAH... RIGHT... THE GREEN GUY...

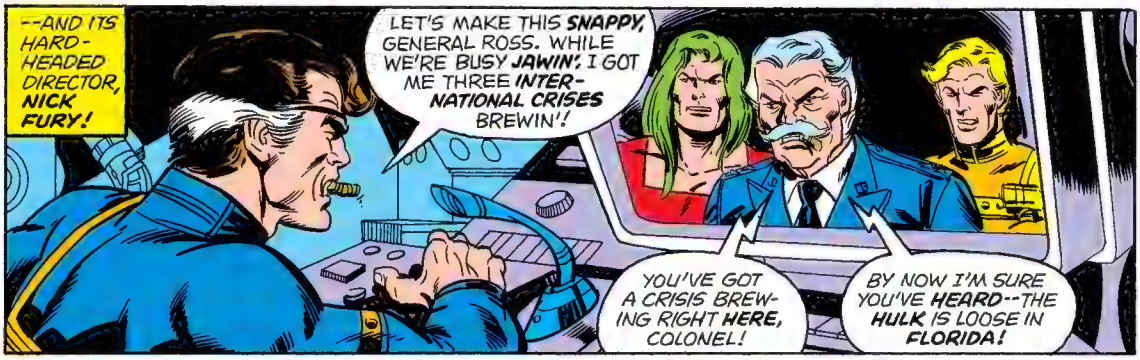
...AN' NOT EVEN THE WHOLE POLICE FORCE CAN STOP HIM!

*AS SEEN IN THE 22-ISSUE COURSE OF THE MAN-THING'S OWN LATE, LAMENTED MAG. --Len

STOP HOUNDING HULK, HUMANS, OR HULK WILL...
WEOOOWEOOWE
HUH?
NOW WHAT?
WHAT'S UP, GUS? WHERE'S THE FIRE?
WE GOT WORSE THAN A FIRE HERE, HANK--WE GOT THE HULK!
IF WE SHOOT AT HIM, NO TELLIN' HOW MANY PEOPLE MIGHT GET HURT, SO WE FIGURED...
YOU FIGURED WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO HANDLE HIM, EH?
WELL, HE AIN'T EXACTLY NO STRAY CAT UP A TREE--
--BUT LET'S SEE IF WE CAN BRING HIM DOWN WITH SOME CONCENTRATED WATER PRESSURE!
BAH! WHEREVER HULK GOES, IT IS ALWAYS THE SAME!
HULK DID NOT WANT TO COME TO THIS TOWN ON EDGE OF SWAMP--
SPRAKK!
--BUT HULK DID NOT KNOW WHERE ELSE TO GO!
HULK ONLY CAME HERE TO TRY TO THINK--
--BUT STILL LITTLE MEN ATTACK HULK--
--TRY TO DROWN HULK WITH WATER--
--AND HULK HATES WATER MORE THAN ANYTHING!!
HOLY HANNAH! THAT BIG GREEN GORILLA CLAPPED HIS HANDS SO HARD--
--HE'S CHURNIN' UP A HURRICANE!


NOW LEAVE HULK IN PEACE, LITTLE MEN--
--OR HULK WILL LEAVE YOU IN PIECES!
I HATE DOIN' THIS--BUT WE GOTTA STOP THAT MONSTER SOMEHOW!
BETTER MOVE QUICK, WHILE HIS BACK IS TURNED TO ME--!
HUH? PUNY HUMAN TRIES TO RUN HULK OVER WITH BIG RED TRUCK?!?
KRUMP!
J-J-JEEZ! H-HE DIDN'T EVEN FLINCH--!
IF HUMAN HAD HURT HULK, HULK WOULD CRUSH HIM LIKE A BUG--
--BUT LITTLE MAN IS LUCKY HULK DOES NOT WANT TO FIGHT!
CITRUSVILLE FIRE DEPT.
PWHAM!
HULK IS TIRED OF FIGHTING WHEREVER HULK GOES! HULK ONLY WANTS A PLACE WHERE HULK CAN LIVE IN PEACE!
BUT, FOR ONCE, HULK WILL NOT LEAVE A PLACE UNTIL HULK KNOWS WHERE HULK IS GOING!
BORIS
JAWS
HULK WILL SIT HERE--AND DECIDE WHAT HULK MUST DO!
BUT HULK WILL NOT WARN YOU AGAIN, PUNY HUMANS!
LEAVE-- HULK-- ALONE!!
JAWS
HE'S JUST SITTIN' ON THAT MARQUEE LIKE A FROG ON A LILY PAD!
WHAT'RE WE SUPPOSED TO DO NOW, GUS?
WHAT D'YOU THINK WE'RE GONNA DO, HANK?
WE'RE GONNA CALL IN THE WHOLE BLAMED ARMY!!


WHILE YOU WERE TURNING THE PAGES, MORE THAN AN HOUR HAS PASSED--AND SINCE OUR JADE-GREEN HERO IS STILL SITTING SOMBERLY ATOP A CITRUS-VILLE MOVIE MARQUEE, WE MIGHT AS WELL TURN OUR ATTENTION TO WHERE THE ACTION IS--
--SPECIFICALLY, TO THE HELI-CARRIER HEADQUARTERS OF THE SPECIALIZED SECURITY AGENCY KNOWN AS S.H.I.E.L.D.*--
*THAT'S SUPREME HEADQUARTERS, INTERNATIONAL ESPIONAGE LAW-ENFORCEMENT DIVISION, ON THE OFF-CHANCE YOU DIDN'T KNOW, EFFENDI.--LEN.


--AND ITS HARD-HEADED DIRECTOR, NICK FURY!
LET'S MAKE THIS SNAPPY, GENERAL ROSS. WHILE WE'RE BUSY JAWIN', I GOT ME THREE INTER-NATIONAL CRISES BREWIN'!
YOU'VE GOT A CRISIS BREW-ING RIGHT HERE, COLONEL!
BY NOW I'M SURE YOU'VE HEARD--THE HULK IS LOOSE IN FLORIDA!

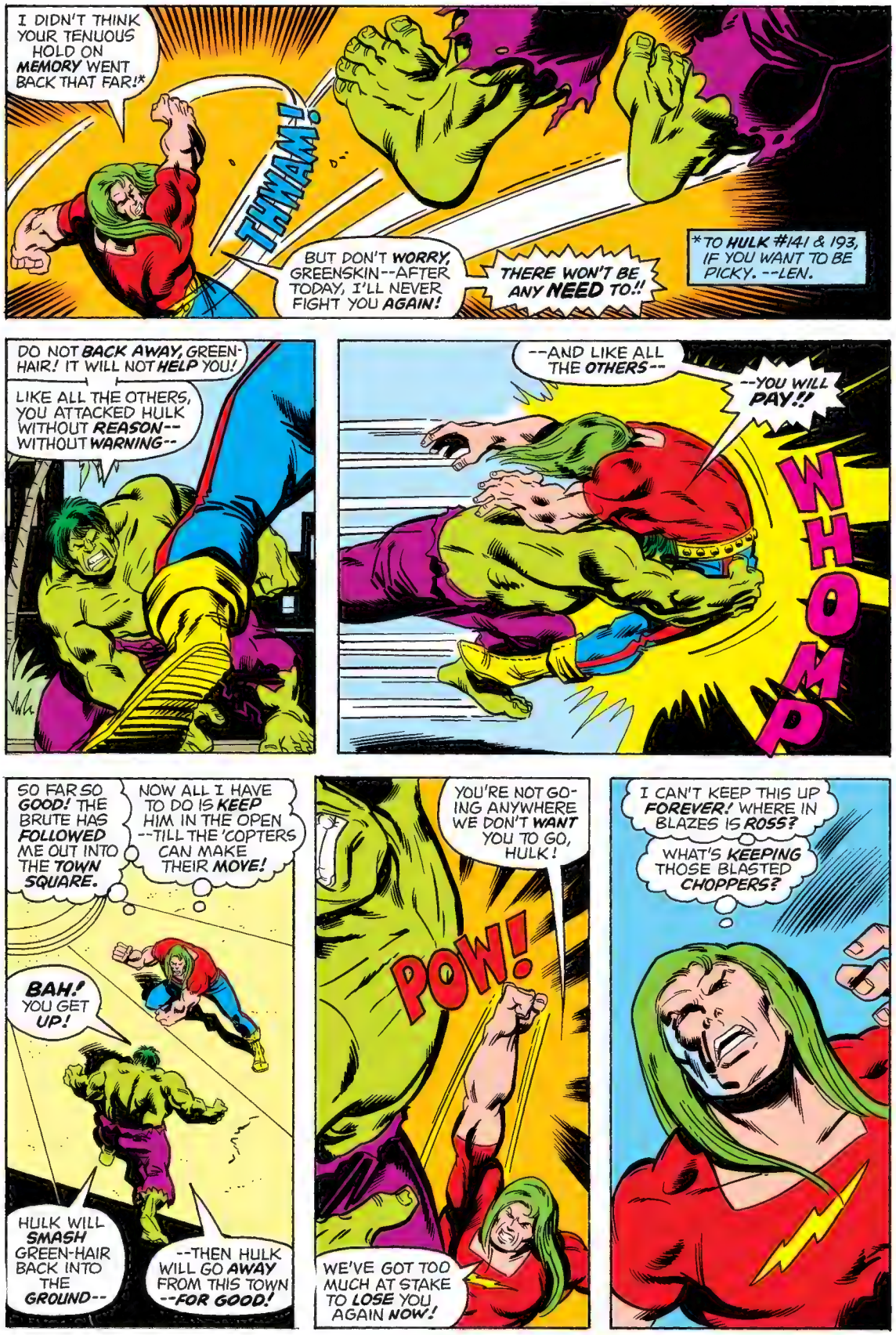
'COURSE I HEARD --BUT THAT'S WHY I ASSIGNED YA CLAY QUARTERMAIN, AIN'T IT?
HE'S S'POSED TA HANDLE THE SHIELD END OF ANY HASSLES YOU GUYS HAVE WITH THAT BIG GREEN GALOOT 'A YERS!
SO WHY'RE YA BOTHERIN' ME?

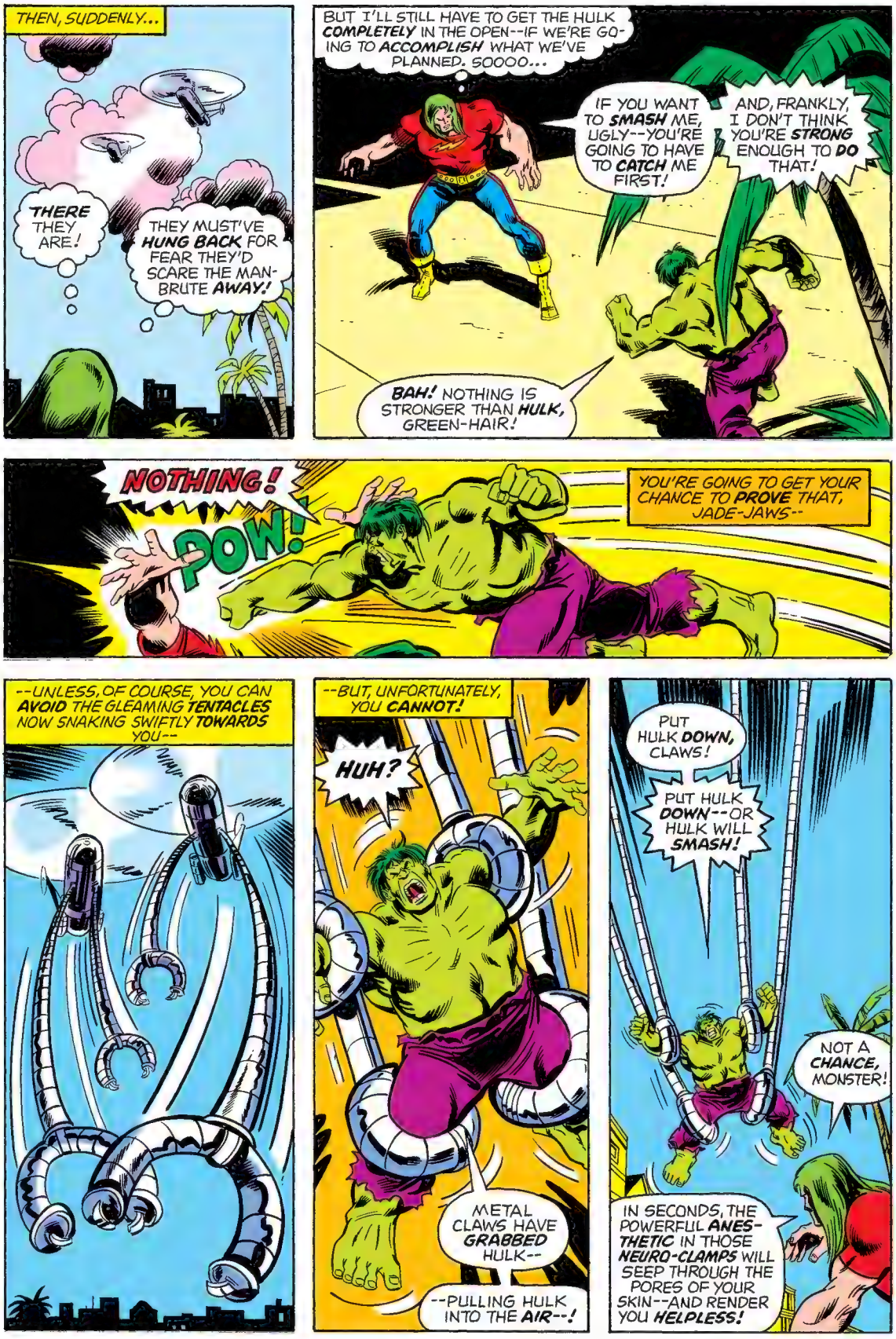
BECAUSE THIS TIME WE'RE GOING TO NEED MAN-POWER AND EQUIP-MENT THAT ONLY YOU CAN SUPPLY, NICK.
BETTER GET YOUR DICTA-TAPE RUNNING, CHIEF. I'VE GOT A LIST OF WHAT WE'LL NEED RIGHT HERE!

AND AFTER THE SMILING SHIELD AGENT HAS DESCRIBED WHAT HE WILL NEED...
ARE YOU CRAZY, QUARTER-MAIN? YA NEED ALL THAT JUST TA TAKE OUT ONE LITTLE MONSTER?
BLAZES, MAN--IT SOUNDS LIKE YER PLANNIN' TA FIGHT A BLASTED WAR!

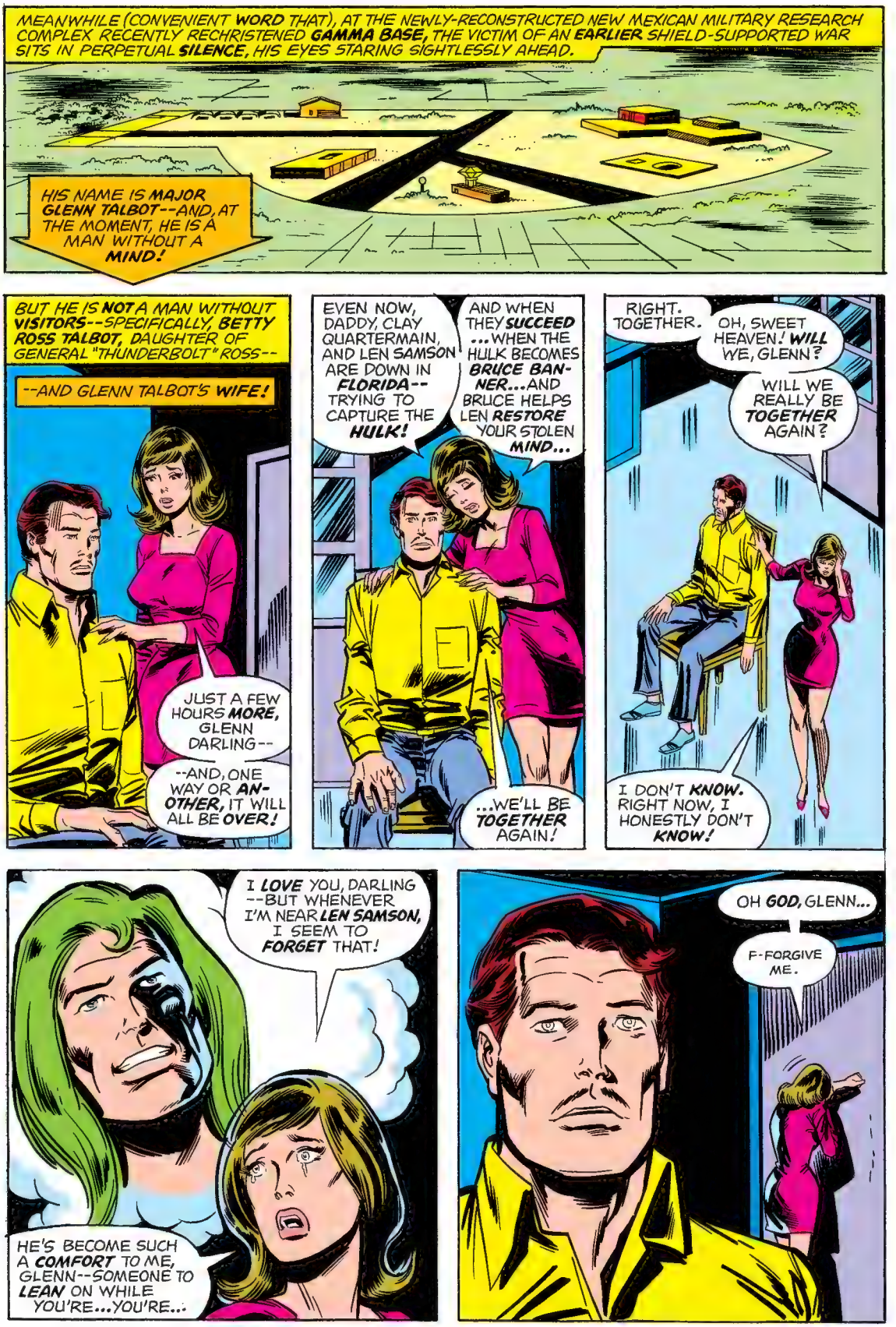
NICK OL' BUDDY, THAT'S PRECISELY WHAT WE'RE PLANNING TO DO!

THINGS HAVEN'T CHANGED MUCH IN THE SIX HOURS SINCE OUR PREVIOUS SCENE. THE HULK STILL SITS IN SILENCE, GATHERING MOSS FAR MORE EASILY THAN HE CAN GATHER HIS JUMBLED THOUGHTS.
JAWS
THEN, SUDDENLY, THE TIME FOR THOUGHT IS OVER-- AS THE AIR IS FILLED WITH A THICK THWUPPING SOUND--
HUH??
--AND, LIKE A SHINING SILVER CAVALRY, SHIELD ARRIVES UPON THE SCENE.
HULK KNEW QUIET WAS TOO GOOD TO LAST!
BAH! BIG FLYING MACHINES--!
THE TOWNSFOLK ARE ALL INDOORS, AS PER OUR ORDERS--AND THE HULK HASN'T EVEN NOTICED.
BUT WE STILL CAN'T ACTIVATE OPERATION: APPREHENSION SO LONG AS HE'S SITTING THAT CLOSE TO THOSE BUILDINGS.
I'LL HAVE TO GO DOWN THERE--AND LURE THE BRUTE OUT TO WHERE WE'LL HAVE ROOM ENOUGH TO ACT!
WAIT A MINUTE, MUSCLES--I'LL GET YOU A 'CHUTE!
DON'T BOTHER, QUARTERMAIN.
DOC SAMSON DOESN'T NEED ONE!!
HUH? HUMAN DROPPING OUT OF SKY AT HULK--
--HUMAN WITH GREEN HAIR?!?
WAIT--! HULK KNOWS THIS ONE! HE HAS FOUGHT HULK BEFORE!
JAWS
JAWS
KRRUMP!
YOU REMEMBER ME, HULK?
I'M IMPRESSED!
THRUDD!

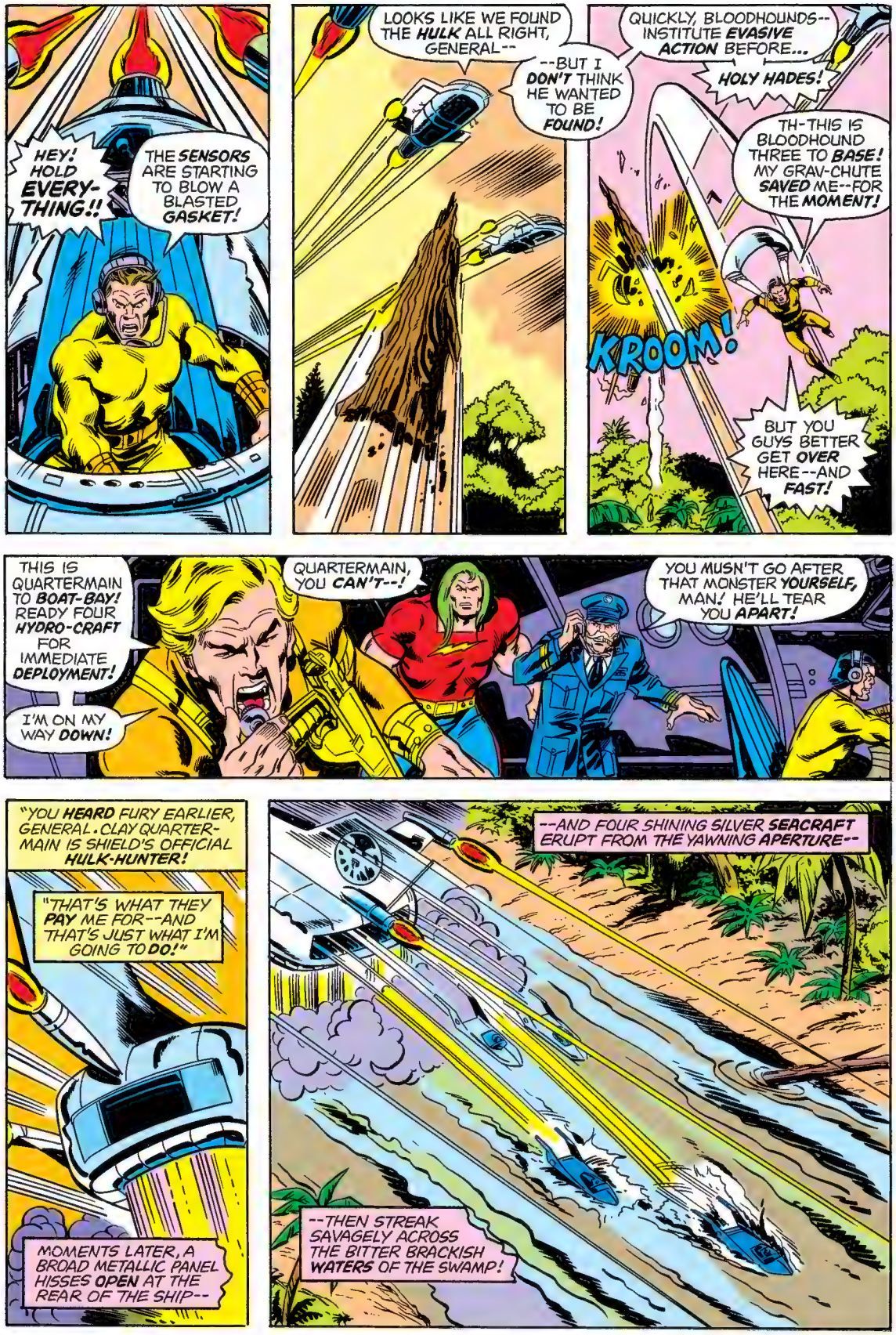

I DIDN'T THINK YOUR TENUOUS HOLD ON MEMORY WENT BACK THAT FAR!*
THWAM!
BUT DON'T WORRY, GREENSKIN--AFTER TODAY, I'LL NEVER FIGHT YOU AGAIN!
THERE WON'T BE ANY NEED TO!!
*TO HULK #141 & 193, IF YOU WANT TO BE PICKY. --LEN.
DO NOT BACK AWAY, GREEN-HAIR! IT WILL NOT HELP YOU!
LIKE ALL THE OTHERS, YOU ATTACKED HULK WITHOUT REASON-- WITHOUT WARNING--
--AND LIKE ALL THE OTHERS--
--YOU WILL PAY!!
WHOMP
SO FAR SO GOOD! THE BRUTE HAS FOLLOWED ME OUT INTO THE TOWN SQUARE.
NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS KEEP HIM IN THE OPEN --TILL THE 'COPTERS CAN MAKE THEIR MOVE!
BAH! YOU GET UP!
HULK WILL SMASH GREEN-HAIR BACK INTO THE GROUND--
--THEN HULK WILL GO AWAY FROM THIS TOWN --FOR GOOD!
YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE WE DON'T WANT YOU TO GO, HULK!
POW!
WE'VE GOT TOO MUCH AT STAKE TO LOSE YOU AGAIN NOW!
I CAN'T KEEP THIS UP FOREVER! WHERE IN BLAZES IS ROSS?
WHAT'S KEEPING THOSE BLASTED CHOPPERS?

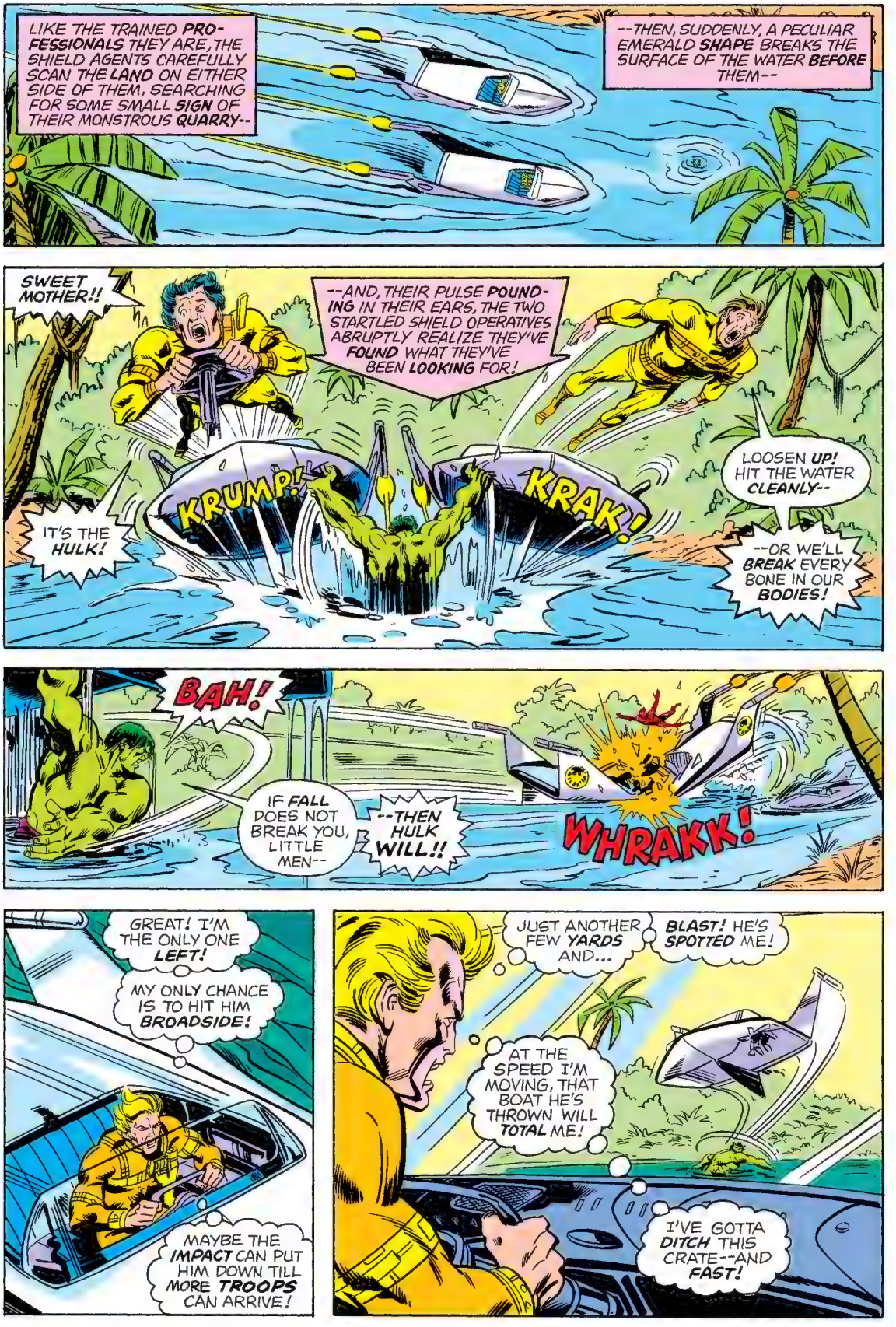

THEN, SUDDENLY...
THERE THEY ARE!
THEY MUST'VE HUNG BACK FOR FEAR THEY'D SCARE THE MAN-BRUTE AWAY!
BUT I'LL STILL HAVE TO GET THE HULK COMPLETELY IN THE OPEN--IF WE'RE GOING TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT WE'VE PLANNED. SOOOO...
IF YOU WANT TO SMASH ME, UGLY--YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO CATCH ME FIRST!
AND, FRANKLY, I DON'T THINK YOU'RE STRONG ENOUGH TO DO THAT!
BAH! NOTHING IS STRONGER THAN HULK, GREEN-HAIR!
NOTHING!
POW!
YOU'RE GOING TO GET YOUR CHANCE TO PROVE THAT, JADE-JAWS--
--UNLESS, OF COURSE, YOU CAN AVOID THE GLEAMING TENTACLES NOW SNAKING SWIFTLY TOWARDS YOU--
--BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, YOU CANNOT!
HUH?
METAL CLAWS HAVE GRABBED HULK--
--PULLING HULK INTO THE AIR--!
PUT HULK DOWN, CLAWS!
PUT HULK DOWN--OR HULK WILL SMASH!
NOT A CHANCE, MONSTER!
IN SECONDS, THE POWERFUL ANESTHETIC IN THOSE NEURO-CLAMPS WILL SEEP THROUGH THE PORES OF YOUR SKIN--AND RENDER YOU HELPLESS!

WITHIN MINUTES, YOU'LL BE UNCONSCIOUS--AND WHEN YOU AWAKEN, YOU'LL BE BACK IN NEW MEXICO...
...TO DO A JOB THAT ONLY YOU CAN HANDLE!
HULK WILL DO NOTHING, GREEN-HAIR--
--EXCEPT CRUSH YOU WHEN HULK BREAKS FREE!
CONGRATULATIONS, SAMSON--THIS TIME YOU GOT HIM!
MAN, IS FURY GOING TO BE SORE AT ME FOR WASTING ALL THAT MAN-POWER AND MACHINERY.
I WOULDN'T BE TOO CONFIDENT TOO QUICKLY, GENTLEMEN.
THAT SPECIAL ANESTHESIA SHOULD HAVE PUT THE HULK TO SLEEP BY NOW--
--AND IT HASN'T!
"HE'S EVEN STRONGER THAN WE THOUGHT HE WAS!"
HULK TOLD YOU HULK WAS STRONG, GREEN-HAIR--
--AND HULK MEANT IT!
SKRAKYTT!
HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!!
A SAVAGE SNARL ON HIS EMERALD LIPS, THE GREEN GOLIATH PLUMMETS FROM THE SKY--AND HURTLES HEADLONG INTO THE STAGNANT SWAMP THAT BORDERS THE TOWN OF CITRUSVILLE!
SOMEONE SHOULD HAVE TOLD HIM THAT FIRST STEP WAS GOING TO BE A LULU!
OH, THAT'S JUST SWELL! WE'VE LOST HIM!
NOW WHAT'RE WE GOING TO DO?
WHAT WE SHOULD HAVE DONE IN THE FIRST PLACE, QUARTERMAIN!
WE'RE GOING TO DECLARE WAR!


MEANWHILE (CONVENIENT WORD THAT), AT THE NEWLY-RECONSTRUCTED NEW MEXICAN MILITARY RESEARCH COMPLEX RECENTLY RECHRISTENED GAMMA BASE, THE VICTIM OF AN EARLIER SHIELD-SUPPORTED WAR SITS IN PERPETUAL SILENCE, HIS EYES STARING SIGHTLESSLY AHEAD.
HIS NAME IS MAJOR GLENN TALBOT--AND, AT THE MOMENT, HE IS A MAN WITHOUT A MIND!
BUT HE IS NOT A MAN WITHOUT VISITORS--SPECIFICALLY, BETTY ROSS TALBOT, DAUGHTER OF GENERAL "THUNDERBOLT" ROSS--
--AND GLENN TALBOT'S WIFE!
JUST A FEW HOURS MORE, GLENN DARLING--
--AND, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, IT WILL ALL BE OVER!
EVEN NOW, DADDY, CLAY QUARTERMAIN, AND LEN SAMSON ARE DOWN IN FLORIDA--TRYING TO CAPTURE THE HULK!
AND WHEN THEY SUCCEED ...WHEN THE HULK BECOMES BRUCE BANNER...AND BRUCE HELPS LEN RESTORE YOUR STOLEN MIND...
...WE'LL BE TOGETHER AGAIN!
RIGHT. TOGETHER.
OH, SWEET HEAVEN! WILL WE, GLENN?
WILL WE REALLY BE TOGETHER AGAIN?
I DON'T KNOW. RIGHT NOW, I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW!
I LOVE YOU, DARLING --BUT WHENEVER I'M NEAR LEN SAMSON, I SEEM TO FORGET THAT!
HE'S BECOME SUCH A COMFORT TO ME, GLENN--SOMEONE TO LEAN ON WHILE YOU'RE...YOU'RE...
OH GOD, GLENN...
F-FORGIVE ME.

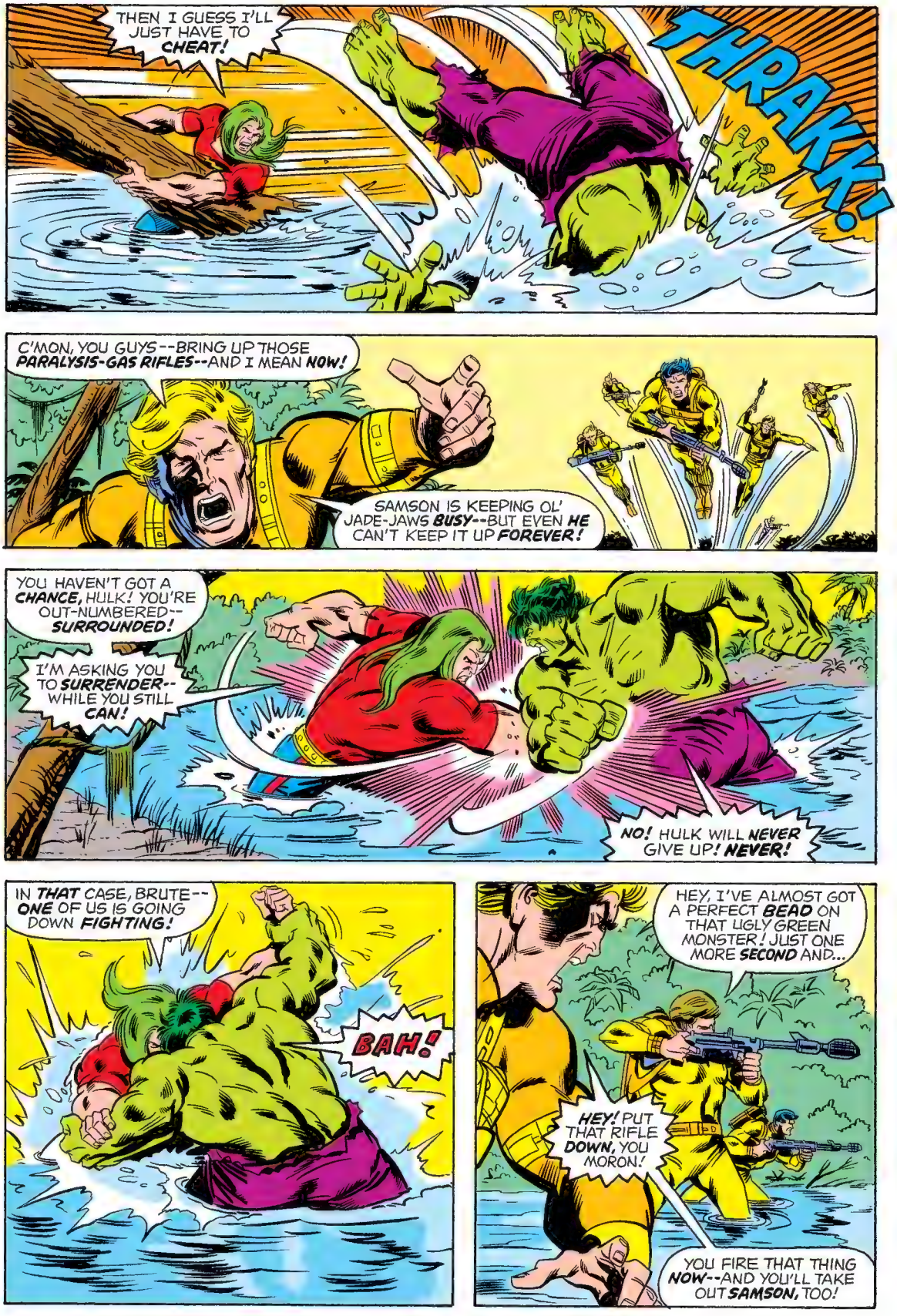
AND, ON THAT SORROWFUL NOTE, WE'LL RETURN TO THE SWAMPY FLORIDA EVERGLADES--
--AND RESUME THE SEARCH FOR THE HULK!
THE VEHICLE IS THE SENSATIONAL NEW SHIELD HOVER-BASE--
--BUT THE PASSENGERS ARE THE SAME OLD FAMILIAR CAST!
IF ANYTHING WILL FIND OL' JADE-JAWS FOR US, GANG--IT'S THE EQUIPMENT IN THIS JAUNTY LITTLE JALOPY.
THE GAFFER* ABSOLUTELY GUARANTEES IT!
THAT MUCH I DON'T DOUBT, QUARTERMAIN.
THE ONLY PROBLEM IS--HOW ARE WE GOING TO HOLD HIM ONCE WE FIND HIM?
*THAT'S SIDNEY E. LEVINE, SHIELD'S SCIENTIFIC WIZARD. --KNOW-IT-ALL LEN.
THE GAFF COVERED THAT LITTLE HASSLE, TOO.
ONCE WE GET CLOSE ENOUGH, WE'LL TAKE HIM OUT WITH THAT SPECIAL PARALYSIS-GAS!
DANGER
DANGER
ONE WHIFF OF THAT IS ENOUGH TO KNOCK OUT THE WHOLE BLAMED MORMON TABERNACLE CHOIR!
THAT'S JUST FINE, QUARTERMAIN-- IF WE GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO USE IT!
BUT TO DO THAT, WE'VE GOT TO FIND HIM FIRST!
GENERAL, HOW ARE WE DOING ON THAT SCORE?
I'LL LET YOU KNOW IN A SECOND, QUARTERMAIN--
--JUST AS SOON AS I CONTACT THE FLYING BLOODHOUNDS!
"IF THOSE CONTRAPTIONS ARE ATTUNED TO THE HULK'S UNIQUE GAMMA-IRRADIATED AURA LIKE YOU SAY THEY ARE, MISTER--
"--THEY SHOULD HAVE COME UP WITH SOMETHING BY NOW!"
SORRY, GENERAL-- BUT WE'VE TURNED UP ZERO SO FAR!
WE'RE GONNA PROCEED TO SEARCH-GRID SECTOR SIX AND TRY TO...


HEY! HOLD EVERY-THING!!
THE SENSORS ARE STARTING TO BLOW A BLASTED GASKET!
LOOKS LIKE WE FOUND THE HULK ALL RIGHT, GENERAL--
--BUT I DON'T THINK HE WANTED TO BE FOUND!
QUICKLY, BLOODHOUNDS--INSTITUTE EVASIVE ACTION BEFORE...
HOLY HADES!
TH-THIS IS BLOODHOUND THREE TO BASE! MY GRAV-CHUTE SAVED ME--FOR THE MOMENT!
KROOM!
BUT YOU GUYS BETTER GET OVER HERE--AND FAST!
THIS IS QUARTERMAIN TO BOAT-BAY! READY FOUR HYDRO-CRAFT FOR IMMEDIATE DEPLOYMENT!
I'M ON MY WAY DOWN!
QUARTERMAIN, YOU CAN'T--!
YOU MUSN'T GO AFTER THAT MONSTER YOURSELF, MAN! HE'LL TEAR YOU APART!
"YOU HEARD FURY EARLIER, GENERAL. CLAY QUARTERMAIN IS SHIELD'S OFFICIAL HULK-HUNTER!
"THAT'S WHAT THEY PAY ME FOR--AND THAT'S JUST WHAT I'M GOING TO DO!"
MOMENTS LATER, A BROAD METALLIC PANEL HISSES OPEN AT THE REAR OF THE SHIP--
--AND FOUR SHINING SILVER SEACRAFT ERUPT FROM THE YAWNING APERTURE--
--THEN STREAK SAVAGELY ACROSS THE BITTER BRACKISH WATERS OF THE SWAMP!

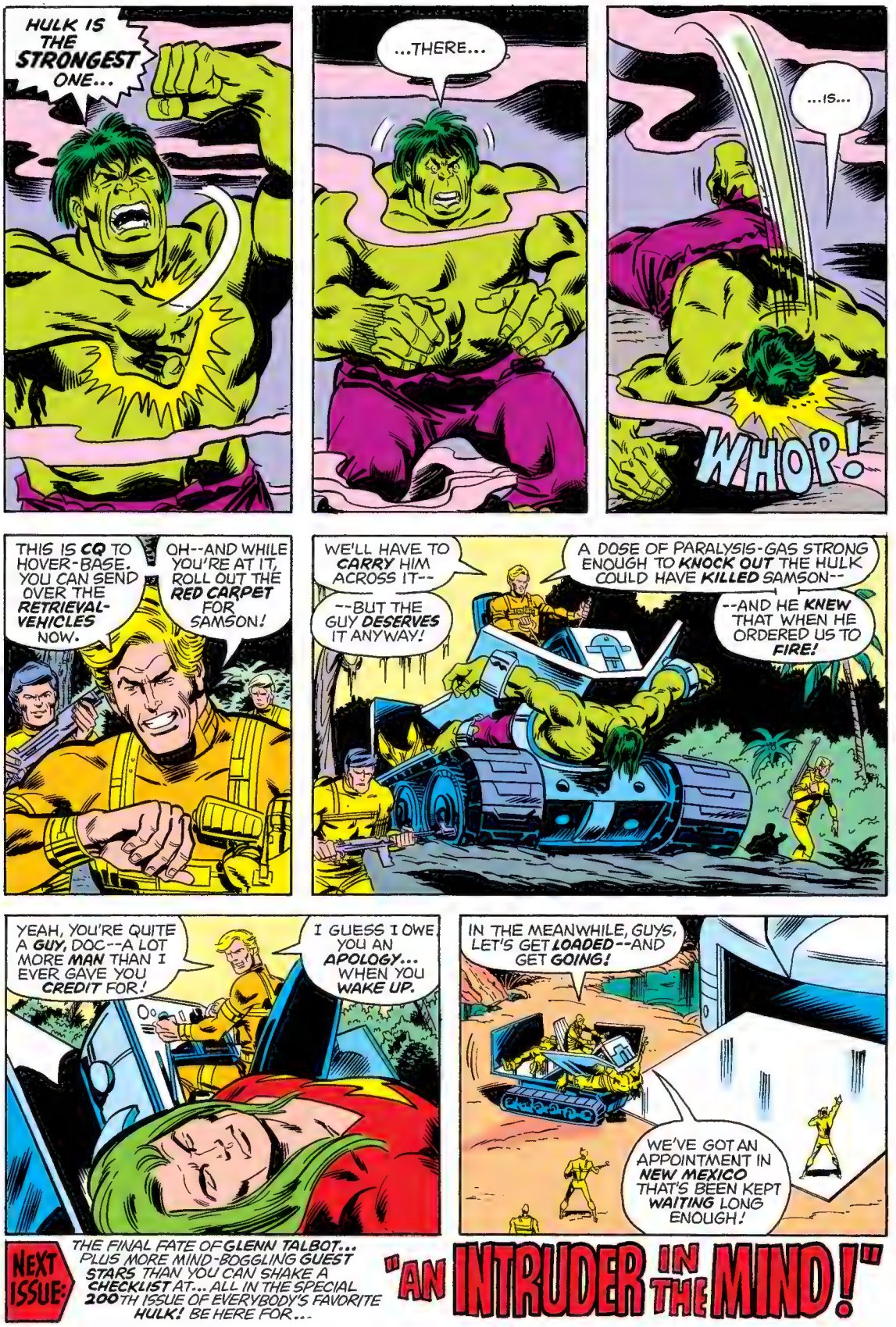

LIKE THE TRAINED PRO-FESSIONALS THEY ARE, THE SHIELD AGENTS CAREFULLY SCAN THE LAND ON EITHER SIDE OF THEM, SEARCHING FOR SOME SMALL SIGN OF THEIR MONSTROUS QUARRY--
--THEN, SUDDENLY, A PECULIAR EMERALD SHAPE BREAKS THE SURFACE OF THE WATER BEFORE THEM--
SWEET MOTHER!!
--AND, THEIR PULSE POUNDING IN THEIR EARS, THE TWO STARTLED SHIELD OPERATIVES ABRUPTLY REALIZE THEY'VE FOUND WHAT THEY'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR!
KRUMP!
KRAK!
IT'S THE HULK!
LOOSEN UP! HIT THE WATER CLEANLY--
--OR WE'LL BREAK EVERY BONE IN OUR BODIES!
BAH!
IF FALL DOES NOT BREAK YOU, LITTLE MEN--
--THEN HULK WILL!!
WHRAKK!
GREAT! I'M THE ONLY ONE LEFT!
MY ONLY CHANCE IS TO HIT HIM BROADSIDE!
MAYBE THE IMPACT CAN PUT HIM DOWN TILL MORE TROOPS CAN ARRIVE!
JUST ANOTHER FEW YARDS AND...
BLAST! HE'S SPOTTED ME!
AT THE SPEED I'M MOVING, THAT BOAT HE'S THROWN WILL TOTAL ME!
I'VE GOTTA DITCH THIS CRATE--AND FAST!

WHEW!
I COULDN'T HAVE CUT THAT MUCH CLOSER IF I TRIED!
KROOM!
THIS IS CQ TO HOVER-BASE! OUR HYDRO-CRAFT ASSAULT FORCE JUST WENT UNDER FASTER THAN THE SPANISH ARMADA!
BETTER GET SOME REINFORCE-MENTS OVER HERE, GANG--AND PRONTO!
BAH! DON'T BOTHER TO CALL OTHER PUNY HUMANS, LITTLE MAN!
THEY WILL NOT HELP YOU!
IF HULK WANTED, HULK COULD STAY AND SMASH THEM ALL--
--BUT HULK HAS HAD ENOUGH OF STUPID FIGHTING FOR ONE DAY!
HULK IS GOING AWAY FROM HERE, AND IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU--
--YOU WILL LET HULK GO IN PEACE!
BLAST THOSE INCREDIBLE LEG-MUSCLES OF HIS! THE HULK IS LEAPING OUT OF THE COMBAT ZONE!
IF WE LOSE HIM THIS TIME, GENERAL, THERE'S NO TELLING WHEN WE'LL FIND HIM AGAIN--
SAMSON--COME BACK HERE!
--SO I'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE SURE WE DON'T LOSE HIM!
WHY DOES HULK'S LIFE NEVER CHANGE? WHY? WHY??
IF HULK TRIED TO CRUSH EVERY-ONE WHO CHASED HULK, THEN HULK WOULD NEVER DO ANYTHING ELSE!

BUT EVEN HULK GROWS TIRED OF FIGHTING SOMETIME, SO HULK WILL GO...
SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOUR REVERIE, BRUTE, BUT AS I TOLD YOU BEFORE--
--YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE --EXCEPT BACK TO NEW MEXICO!
AAARRGHH!!
WHOOMP!
OR DOWN INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE SWAMP ONCE MORE!
THE EMERALD-TRESSED DOC SAMSON HAS LESS THAN AN INSTANT TO STEAL A DEEP BREATH--BEFORE HE AND THE HULK DISAPPEAR BENEATH THE MIRE.
SPLOOSH!
FOR SEVERAL LONG SECONDS, THE BRACKISH OOZE IS DISTURBED ONLY BY THE FROTH OF ESCAPING AIR BUBBLES--
--THEN, FOR A MOMENT, THERE IS SILENCE!
BY NOW, THE HULK IS USED TO GETTING DUNKED IN THIS STAGNANT MORASS--
POW!
--BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN HE LIKES IT!
YOU'RE TOUGH, HULK--BUT YOU'RE STILL COMING BACK TO NEW MEXICO WITH ME--
--EVEN IF I HAVE TO DRAG YOU!
THEN COME AND TRY, GREEN-HAIR!
NOTHING THAT LIVES CAN BEAT HULK IN A FAIR FIGHT!


THEN I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO CHEAT!
THRAKK!
C'MON, YOU GUYS--BRING UP THOSE PARALYSIS-GAS RIFLES--AND I MEAN NOW!
SAMSON IS KEEPING OL' JADE-JAWS BUSY--BUT EVEN HE CAN'T KEEP IT UP FOREVER!
YOU HAVEN'T GOT A CHANCE, HULK! YOU'RE OUT-NUMBERED--SURROUNDED!
I'M ASKING YOU TO SURRENDER--WHILE YOU STILL CAN!
NO! HULK WILL NEVER GIVE UP! NEVER!
IN THAT CASE, BRUTE--ONE OF US IS GOING DOWN FIGHTING!
BAH!
HEY, I'VE ALMOST GOT A PERFECT BEAD ON THAT UGLY GREEN MONSTER! JUST ONE MORE SECOND AND...
HEY! PUT THAT RIFLE DOWN, YOU MORON!
YOU FIRE THAT THING NOW--AND YOU'LL TAKE OUT SAMSON, TOO!

SAMSON, GET THE DEVIL OUT OF THERE!
WE CAN'T FIRE THE PARALYSIS-GAS TILL YOU DO!
NO WAY, QUARTERMAIN! I LET GO OF THE HULK--AND HE'LL BE GONE BEFORE YOU CAN PULL THE TRIGGER!
YOU WANT TO USE THAT STUFF, MISTER --USE IT NOW!
I MEAN IT, MAN! I DON'T CARE IF YOU GET ME-- SO LONG AS YOU GET THE HULK!
USE THAT BLASTED GAS!!
YOU HEARD THE MAN, FELLAS-- FIRE!
AND MAY HEAVEN HELP US ALL.
PAK!
POK!
POK!
HUH? PUNY HUMANS TRY TO HURT HULK WITH GAS!
AND THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN ESCAPE IT, BRUTE!
EVEN NOW, IT'S SEEPING IN THROUGH THE PORES OF YOUR SKIN!
CHUFF!
CHUFF!
WE'VE WON HULK!
WE'VE...
...WON...
BAH! GAS PUT GREEN-HAIR TO SLEEP! GAS WAS STRONGER THAN GREEN-HAIR!
BUT GAS DID NOT HURT HULK!
HULK IS STRONGER THAN GAS!


HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE...
...THERE...
...IS...
WHOP!
THIS IS CQ TO HOVER-BASE. YOU CAN SEND OVER THE RETRIEVAL-VEHICLES NOW.
OH--AND WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, ROLL OUT THE RED CARPET FOR SAMSON!
WE'LL HAVE TO CARRY HIM ACROSS IT--
--BUT THE GUY DESERVES IT ANYWAY!
A DOSE OF PARALYSIS-GAS STRONG ENOUGH TO KNOCK OUT THE HULK COULD HAVE KILLED SAMSON--
--AND HE KNEW THAT WHEN HE ORDERED US TO FIRE!
YEAH, YOU'RE QUITE A GUY, DOC--A LOT MORE MAN THAN I EVER GAVE YOU CREDIT FOR!
I GUESS I OWE YOU AN APOLOGY... WHEN YOU WAKE UP.
IN THE MEANWHILE, GUYS, LET'S GET LOADED--AND GET GOING!
WE'VE GOT AN APPOINTMENT IN NEW MEXICO THAT'S BEEN KEPT WAITING LONG ENOUGH!
NEXT ISSUE:
THE FINAL FATE OF GLENN TALBOT... PLUS MORE MIND-BOGGLING GUEST STARS THAN YOU CAN SHAKE A CHECKLIST AT... ALL IN THE SPECIAL 200TH ISSUE OF EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE HULK! BE HERE FOR...
"AN INTRUDER IN THE MIND!"

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MARVEL COMICS GROUP
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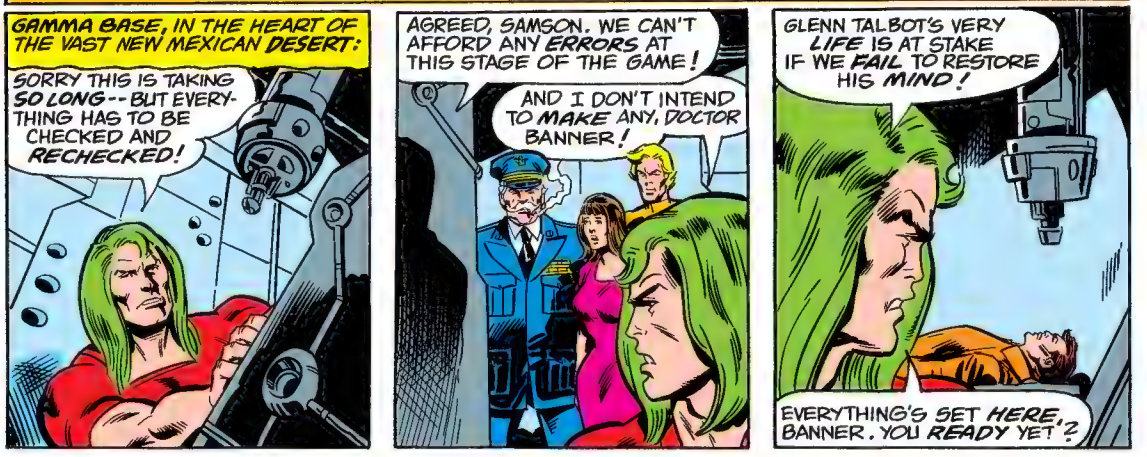
THE INCREDIBLE HULK
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
THIS IS IT!
THE SPECTACULAR 200TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!
Featuring THE MOST SENSATIONAL GUEST STARS OF ALL!
THE MONSTER OR THE MAN?
BUCKLER+ROMITA

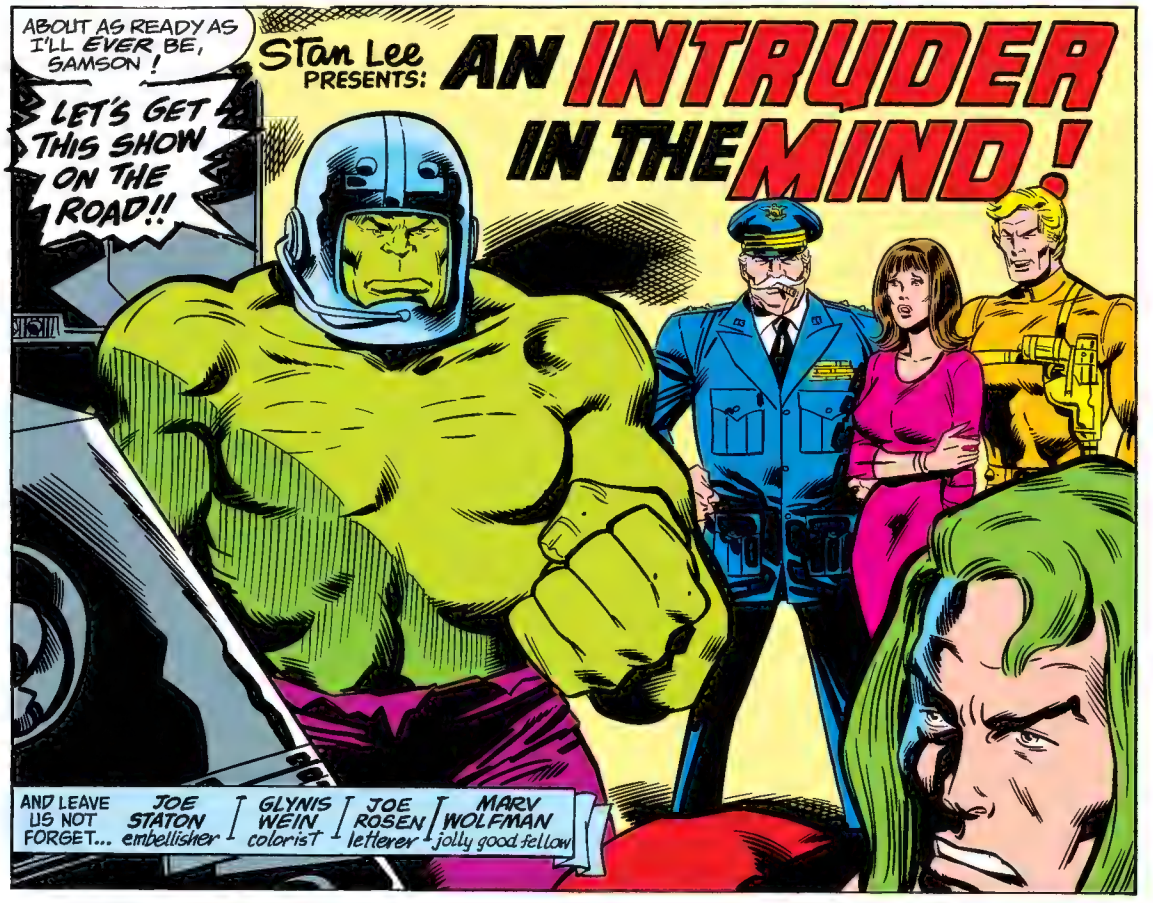
FOURTEEN YEARS AGO THIS MONTH, STAN LEE AND JACK KIRBY CREATED...

THE INCREDIBLE HULK!

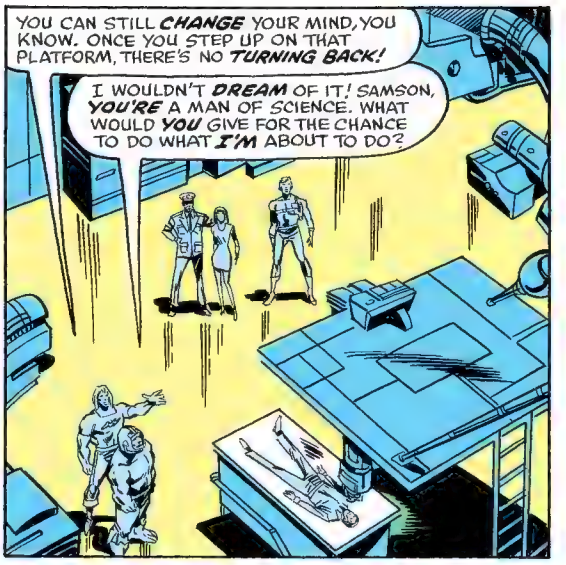
NOW LEN WEIN AND SAL BUSCEMA PROUDLY ANNOUNCE THE REAFFIRMATION OF COMIC-DOM'S MOST UNUSUAL SUPER-HERO!

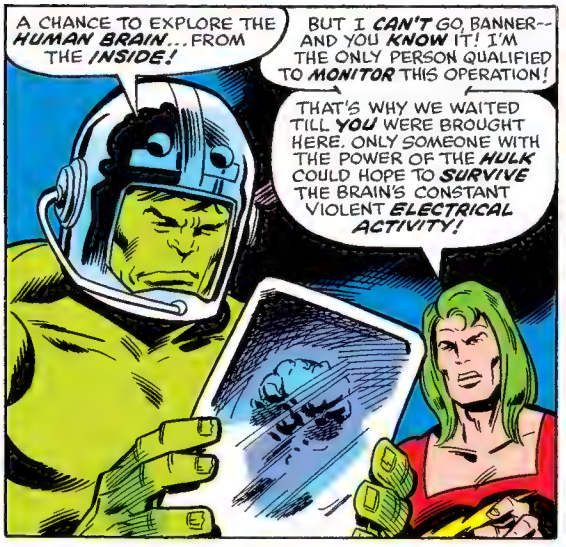
IN OTHER WORDS, EFFENDI--YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHIN' YET!


GAMMA BASE, IN THE HEART OF THE VAST NEW MEXICAN DESERT:
SORRY THIS IS TAKING SO LONG--BUT EVERYTHING HAS TO BE CHECKED AND RECHECKED!
AGREED, SAMSON. WE CAN'T AFFORD ANY ERRORS AT THIS STAGE OF THE GAME!
AND I DON'T INTEND TO MAKE ANY, DOCTOR BANNER!
GLENN TALBOT'S VERY LIFE IS AT STAKE IF WE FAIL TO RESTORE HIS MIND!
EVERYTHING'S SET HERE, BANNER. YOU READY YET?


ABOUT AS READY AS I'LL EVER BE, SAMSON!
LET'S GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD!!
Stan Lee PRESENTS:
AN INTRUDER IN THE MIND!
AND LEAVE US NOT FORGET... JOE STATON embellisher | GLYNIS WEIN colorist | JOE ROSEN letterer | MARV WOLFMAN jolly good fellow

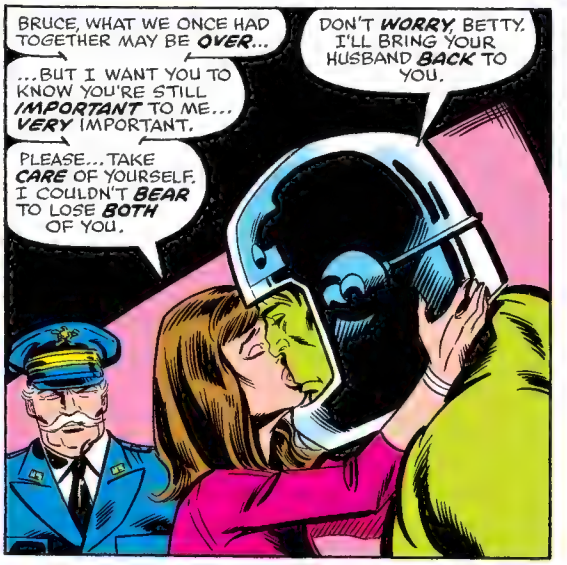
ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE MICRON-CANNON, BANNER?
NONE. I HAVE ABSOLUTE FAITH IN ITS INVENTOR, HENRY PYM!*
YOU'D BETTER HAVE, DOCTOR, BECAUSE TALBOT'S LIFE--AND YOURS--MAY DEPEND ON THIS MACHINE!
*OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE AVENGER CALLED YELLOWJACKET THESE DAYS, RIGHT?--LEN.

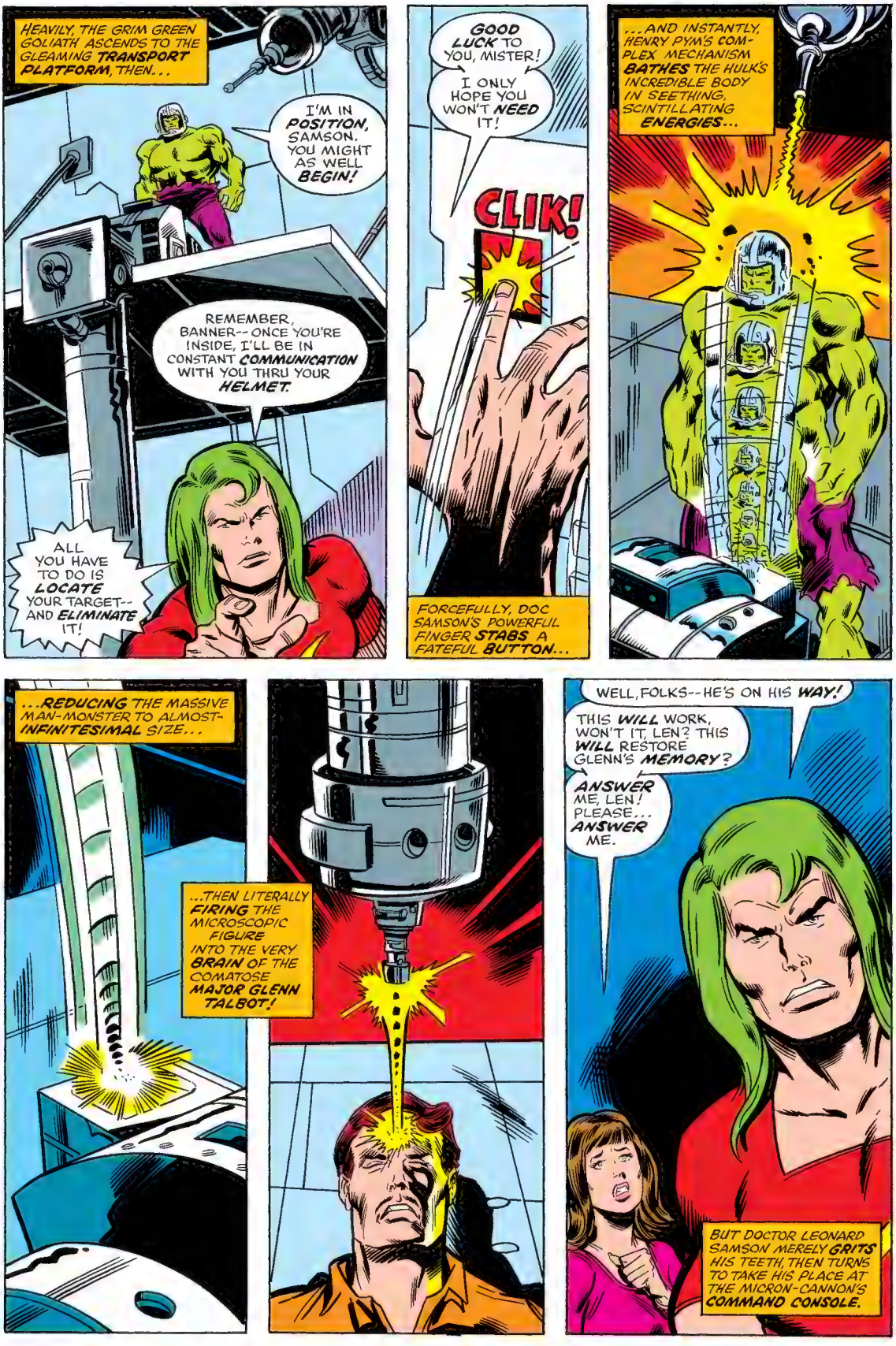

YOU CAN STILL CHANGE YOUR MIND, YOU KNOW. ONCE YOU STEP UP ON THAT PLATFORM, THERE'S NO TURNING BACK!
I WOULDN'T DREAM OF IT! SAMSON, YOU'RE A MAN OF SCIENCE. WHAT WOULD YOU GIVE FOR THE CHANCE TO DO WHAT I'M ABOUT TO DO?

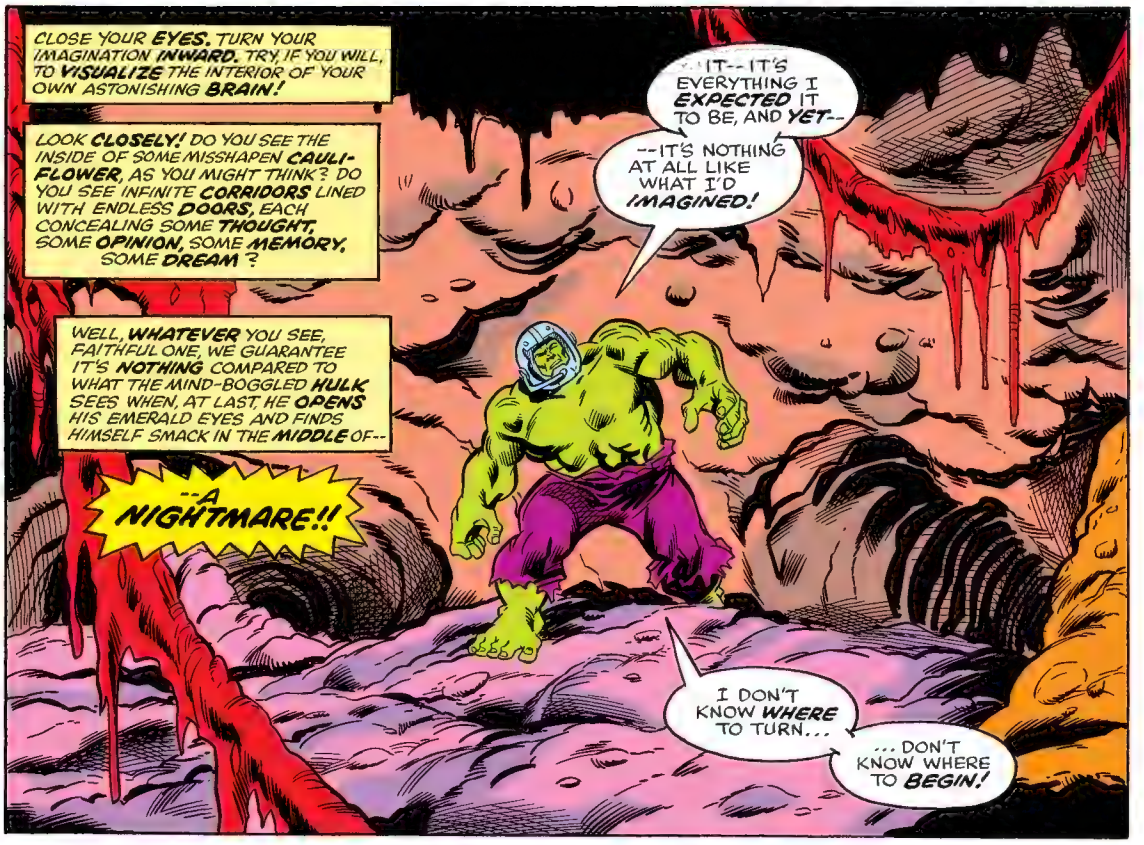

A CHANCE TO EXPLORE THE HUMAN BRAIN... FROM THE INSIDE!
BUT I CAN'T GO, BANNER--AND YOU KNOW IT! I'M THE ONLY PERSON QUALIFIED TO MONITOR THIS OPERATION!
THAT'S WHY WE WAITED TILL YOU WERE BROUGHT HERE. ONLY SOMEONE WITH THE POWER OF THE HULK COULD HOPE TO SURVIVE THE BRAIN'S CONSTANT VIOLENT ELECTRICAL ACTIVITY!

YOU MEAN ONLY SOMEONE WITH THE POWER OF A HULK--AND THE MIND OF A ROBERT BRUCE BANNER, DON'T YOU?
FORTUNATELY, YOUR EXPERIMENTAL ENCEPHALO-HELMET ENABLES ME TO RETAIN CONTROL OF THE MAN-BRUTE'S BODY!

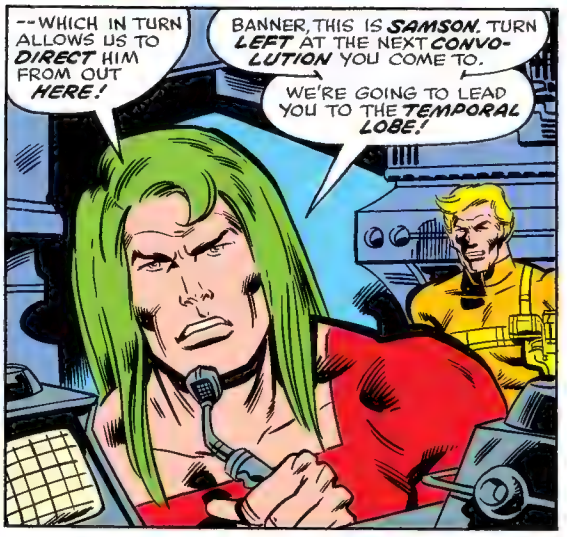
PRETTY MUCH THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS, HUH, DOC?
YOU JUST HANG IN THERE, BUDDY--AND EVERYTHING'LL WORK OUT FINE!
THANK YOU, GENERAL ROSS, YOU TOO, QUARTERMAIN.
BEST OF LUCK, MY BOY. OUR PRAYERS GO WITH YOU.

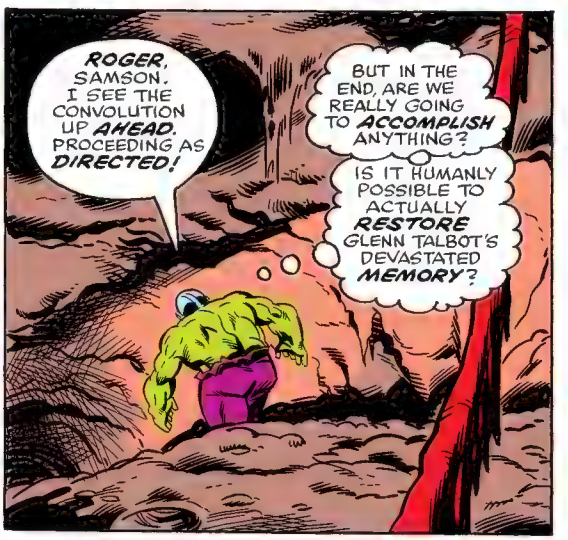

BRUCE, WHAT WE ONCE HAD TOGETHER MAY BE OVER...
...BUT I WANT YOU TO KNOW YOU'RE STILL IMPORTANT TO ME... VERY IMPORTANT.
PLEASE... TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF. I COULDN'T BEAR TO LOSE BOTH OF YOU.
DON'T WORRY, BETTY. I'LL BRING YOUR HUSBAND BACK TO YOU.


HEAVILY, THE GRIM GREEN GOLIATH ASCENDS TO THE GLEAMING TRANSPORT PLATFORM, THEN...
I'M IN POSITION, SAMSON. YOU MIGHT AS WELL BEGIN!
REMEMBER, BANNER-- ONCE YOU'RE INSIDE, I'LL BE IN CONSTANT COMMUNICATION WITH YOU THRU YOUR HELMET.
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS LOCATE YOUR TARGET-- AND ELIMINATE IT!
GOOD LUCK TO YOU, MISTER!
I ONLY HOPE YOU WON'T NEED IT!
CLIK!
FORCEFULLY, DOC SAMSON'S POWERFUL FINGER STABS A FATEFUL BUTTON...
...AND INSTANTLY, HENRY PYM'S COMPLEX MECHANISM BATHES THE HULK'S INCREDIBLE BODY IN SEETHING, SCINTILLATING ENERGIES...
...REDUCING THE MASSIVE MAN-MONSTER TO ALMOST-INFINITESIMAL SIZE...
...THEN LITERALLY FIRING THE MICROSCOPIC FIGURE INTO THE VERY BRAIN OF THE COMATOSE MAJOR GLENN TALBOT!
WELL, FOLKS--HE'S ON HIS WAY!
THIS WILL WORK, WON'T IT, LEN? THIS WILL RESTORE GLENN'S MEMORY?
ANSWER ME, LEN! PLEASE... ANSWER ME.
BUT DOCTOR LEONARD SAMSON MERELY GRITS HIS TEETH, THEN TURNS TO TAKE HIS PLACE AT THE MICRON-CANNON'S COMMAND CONSOLE.

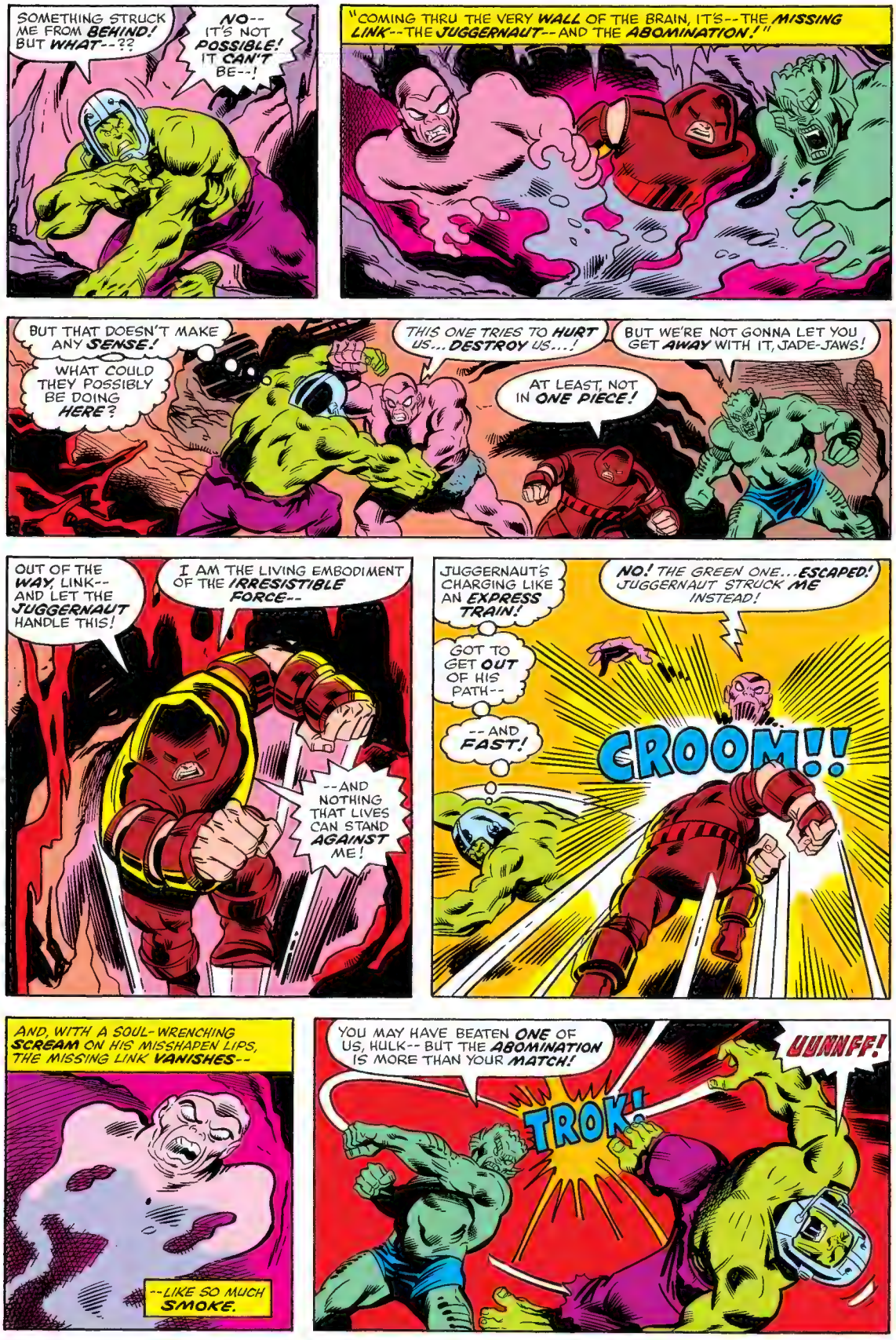

CLOSE YOUR EYES. TURN YOUR IMAGINATION INWARD. TRY, IF YOU WILL, TO VISUALIZE THE INTERIOR OF YOUR OWN ASTONISHING BRAIN!
LOOK CLOSELY! DO YOU SEE THE INSIDE OF SOME MISSHAPEN CAULI-FLOWER, AS YOU MIGHT THINK? DO YOU SEE INFINITE CORRIDORS LINED WITH ENDLESS DOORS, EACH CONCEALING SOME THOUGHT, SOME OPINION, SOME MEMORY, SOME DREAM ?
WELL, WHATEVER YOU SEE, FAITHFUL ONE, WE GUARANTEE IT'S NOTHING COMPARED TO WHAT THE MIND-BOGGLED HULK SEES WHEN, AT LAST, HE OPENS HIS EMERALD EYES AND FINDS HIMSELF SMACK IN THE MIDDLE OF--
--A NIGHTMARE!!
...IT--IT'S EVERYTHING I EXPECTED IT TO BE, AND YET--
--IT'S NOTHING AT ALL LIKE WHAT I'D IMAGINED!
I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO TURN...
... DON'T KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN!

HOW'S BANNER SUPPOSED TO FIND HIS WAY AROUND IN THERE, SAMSON?
IT HAS TO BE LIKE TRYING TO NAVIGATE THE LOS ANGELES FREEWAY WITH YOUR HEAD IN A PAPER BAG!
THAT'S WHY WE'RE HERE, QUARTERMAIN.
THE ENCEPHALO-HELMET ENABLES US TO TRACK BANNER'S PROGRESS--


--WHICH IN TURN ALLOWS US TO DIRECT HIM FROM OUT HERE!
BANNER, THIS IS SAMSON. TURN LEFT AT THE NEXT CONVO-LUTION YOU COME TO.
WE'RE GOING TO LEAD YOU TO THE TEMPORAL LOBE!


ROGER, SAMSON. I SEE THE CONVOLUTION UP AHEAD. PROCEEDING AS DIRECTED!
BUT IN THE END, ARE WE REALLY GOING TO ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING?
IS IT HUMANLY POSSIBLE TO ACTUALLY RESTORE GLENN TALBOT'S DEVASTATED MEMORY?

TALBOT'S CONSCIOUS MIND WAS ERASED BY THE GROTESQUE RUSSIAN GENIUS CALLED THE GREMLIN!*
SO OUR ONLY HOPE OF CURING GLENN IS TO DESTROY THE MYSTERIOUS MENTAL BLOCK THAT HAS PREVENTED ANYONE FROM REACHING HIS SUBCONSCIOUS MIND.
* BACK IN HULK #188. --LEN.
BUT WHAT DOES A MENTAL BLOCK LOOK LIKE, AND WHAT...?
AARRGGHH!
IKKT!
BANNER, WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THERE?
BLAST IT, BANNER-- ANSWER ME!
GOT CAUGHT... IN AN ELECTRICITY FIELD... PAIN IS... INCREDIBLE...
ADJUSTING HELMET... TO BLOCK IT OUT...
THERE... DONE!
BUT MY BRAIN FEELS LIKE IT'S BEEN SHORT-CIRCUITED!
WHY IN BLAZES DIDN'T YOU WARN ME THIS MIGHT HAPPEN, SAMSON?
I DID, DOCTOR-- BUT I'D HOPED THE HELMET MIGHT PROTECT YOU!
THAT'S WHY WE SENT YOU INSIDE, REMEMBER? NOBODY ELSE COULD EVER HAVE SURVIVED THAT ATTACK!
SOMEHOW I DON'T FIND THAT VERY COMFORTING, SAMSON.
JUST BECAUSE I SURVIVED ONE ATTACK DOESN'T MEAN I'LL SURVIVE ANOTHER!
POINT WELL TAKEN, DOCTOR.
UNNGH!!
BROK!
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW WELL TAKEN!


SOMETHING STRUCK ME FROM BEHIND! BUT WHAT--??
NO-- IT'S NOT POSSIBLE! IT CAN'T BE--!
"COMING THRU THE VERY WALL OF THE BRAIN, IT'S--THE MISSING LINK--THE JUGGERNAUT--AND THE ABOMINATION!"
BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE!
WHAT COULD THEY POSSIBLY BE DOING HERE?
THIS ONE TRIES TO HURT US... DESTROY US...!
AT LEAST, NOT IN ONE PIECE!
BUT WE'RE NOT GONNA LET YOU GET AWAY WITH IT, JADE-JAWS!
OUT OF THE WAY, LINK-- AND LET THE JUGGERNAUT HANDLE THIS!
I AM THE LIVING EMBODIMENT OF THE IRRESISTIBLE FORCE--
--AND NOTHING THAT LIVES CAN STAND AGAINST ME!
JUGGERNAUT'S CHARGING LIKE AN EXPRESS TRAIN!
GOT TO GET OUT OF HIS PATH--
--AND FAST!
NO! THE GREEN ONE...ESCAPED! JUGGERNAUT STRUCK ME INSTEAD!
CROOM!!
AND, WITH A SOUL-WRENCHING SCREAM ON HIS MISSHAPEN LIPS, THE MISSING LINK VANISHES--
--LIKE SO MUCH SMOKE.
YOU MAY HAVE BEATEN ONE OF US, HULK-- BUT THE ABOMINATION IS MORE THAN YOUR MATCH!
TROK!
UUNFF!

I'M GONNA STOMP YOU INTO THE GROUND, JADE-JAWS--AND I'M GONNA ENJOY IT!
THE NAME ISN'T JADE-JAWS, MISTER--
YyAARrGGHH!!
--IT'S BANNER!
POW!
WATCH OUT, YOU FOOL! YOU'RE GOING TO...
AAIIIEEEEE
KROOM!
AND, LIKE THE MISSING LINK BEFORE THEM, THE JUGGERNAUT AND THE ABOMINATION ABRUPTLY FADE AMIDST SCREAMING AND SMOKE.
GOOD LORD! THEY'RE BOTH DISSOLVING--
--AS IF THEY WERE NOTHING MORE THAN...
MEMORIES, BANNER! THEY'RE ONLY MEMORIES!
TALBOT'S SUBCONSCIOUS HAS SOMEHOW DETECTED YOU INTRUDING IN HIS MIND--AND TAKEN STEPS TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST YOU!
IT'S MANUFACTURING SPECIAL ANTIBODIES TO DESTROY YOU!
WELL, FOR MANIFESTED PHANTOMS, SAMSON--THEY PACK ONE HECK OF A PUNCH!
MY HEAD IS POUNDING LIKE A HYPER-ACTIVE JACK-HAMMER!
FRANKLY, MY SIMPLE-MINDED FOE, THE PAIN YOU SUFFER NOW IS NOTHING--
--WHEN COMPARED TO THE AGONIES TO COME!
ZZKKAAKK!!
HHUUNNFF!!

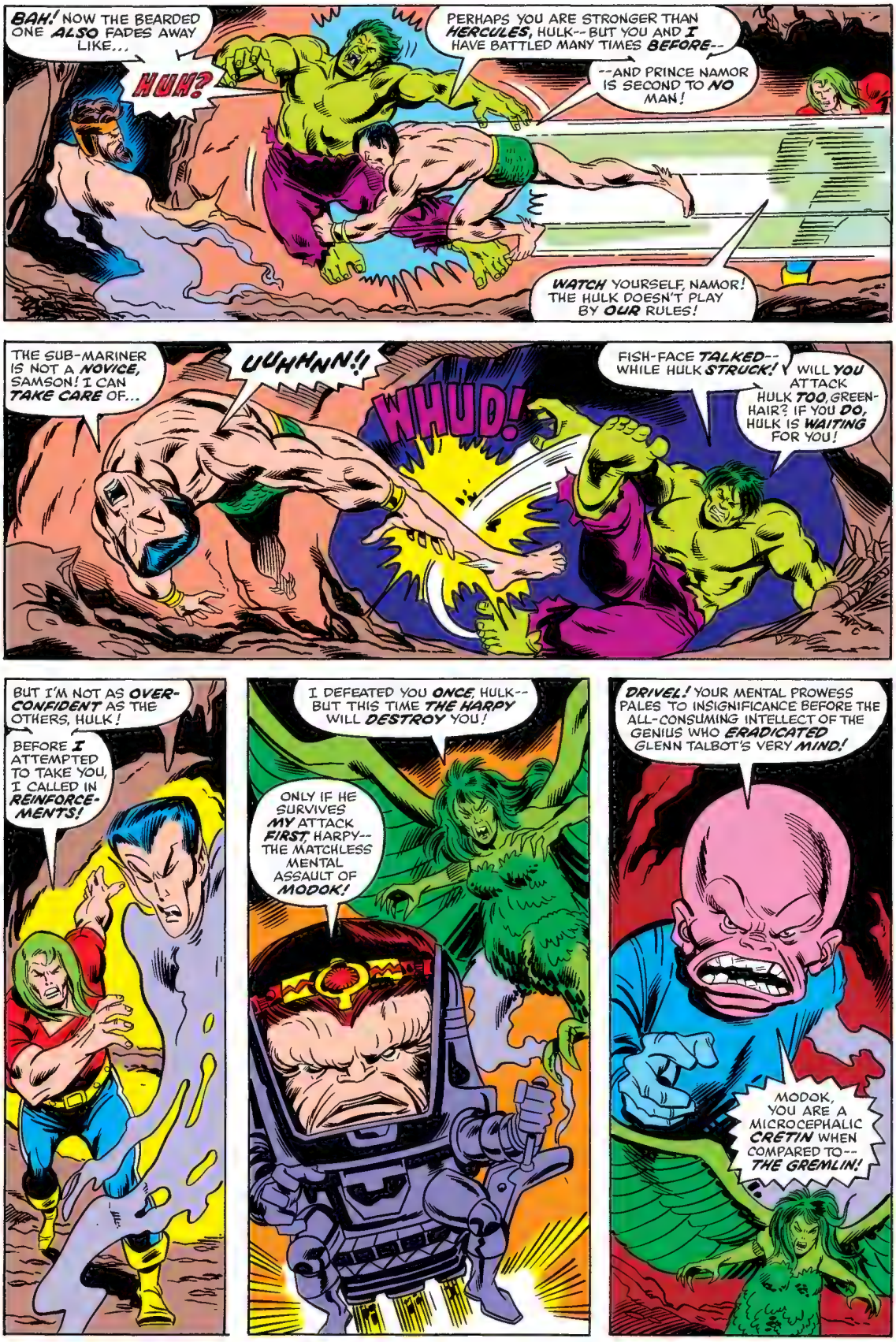
LOOKS LIKE TALBOT'S BRAIN HASN'T STOPPED COOKING YET!
NOW HE'S CONJURED UP MY MOST DANGEROUS ADVERSARY OF ALL--
--THE LETHAL LEADER!
MY FIRST BLAST WAS ONLY A WARNING, HULK--
--BUT MY SECOND BLAST WILL REDUCE YOU TO SCATTERED ATOMS!
THAT'S IF I DON'T FINISH HIM FIRST, BIG-BRAIN!
LET'S SEE IF OL' GREENSKIN CAN SURVIVE THE FULL UNLEASHED POWER OF--THE RHINO!
THOOM
YOU HORN-HEADED CRETIN! YOU KNOCKED THE HULK OUT OF THE PATH OF MY DESTRUCTROID-RAY!
DON'T SWEAT IT, LEADER! THIS TIME I'LL...
HUH?
MISTER, YOU SHOULDN'T TRY TO HORN IN WHERE YOU DON'T BELONG!
THERE'S A MAN'S LIFE AT STAKE IN ALL THIS--
"--AND NO WARMED-OVER NIGHT-MARES ARE GOING TO STOP ME FROM DOING WHAT I CAN TO SAVE HIM!"
DAM!
AND THE THUNDER OF VIOLENT IMPACT IS JOINED BY TORMENTED SCREAMING--
--AS THE LEADER AND THE RHINO RETURN TO SOME NAME-LESS LIMBO WITHIN GLENN TALBOT'S MIND!

SAMSON, YOU SURE THIS HELMET OF YOURS IS WORKING OKAY?
MY HEAD IS CHURNING SO BAD, I CAN HARDLY THINK!
BLAST YOU, SAMSON! AREN'T YOU EVEN LISTENING?
CALM DOWN, BANNER--I HEAR YOU! APPARENTLY, THE BEATING YOU'RE TAKING IN THERE HAS DAMAGED THE HELMET SLIGHTLY--
--BUT YOU'RE ALREADY MORE THAN HALFWAY TO YOUR GOAL!
JUST KEEP YOUR HEAD, DOCTOR, IT WILL ALL BE OVER SOON!
SAMSON, I ONLY HOPE IT'S OVER...
...BEFORE I AM!
IT'S OVER FER YOU RIGHT NOW, MUSCLE-BOUND!
YOU CANNOT HOPE TO ENDURE OUR COMBINED ASSAULT!
EH? WHAT NOW?
OH, SWELL!
IT'S THE SANDMAN-- AND THE MANDARIN!
WELL, THAT JUST ABOUT TEARS IT!
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS INSANITY... MORE THAN ENOUGH!
NOW EITHER YOU FOUL-MOUTHED FANTASIES GET OUT OF MY WAY--
--OR I'M GOING RIGHT THRU YOU!
ARROGANT DOLT! THE MIGHTY RINGS OF THE MANDARIN WILL DESTROY YOU WHERE YOU STAND!

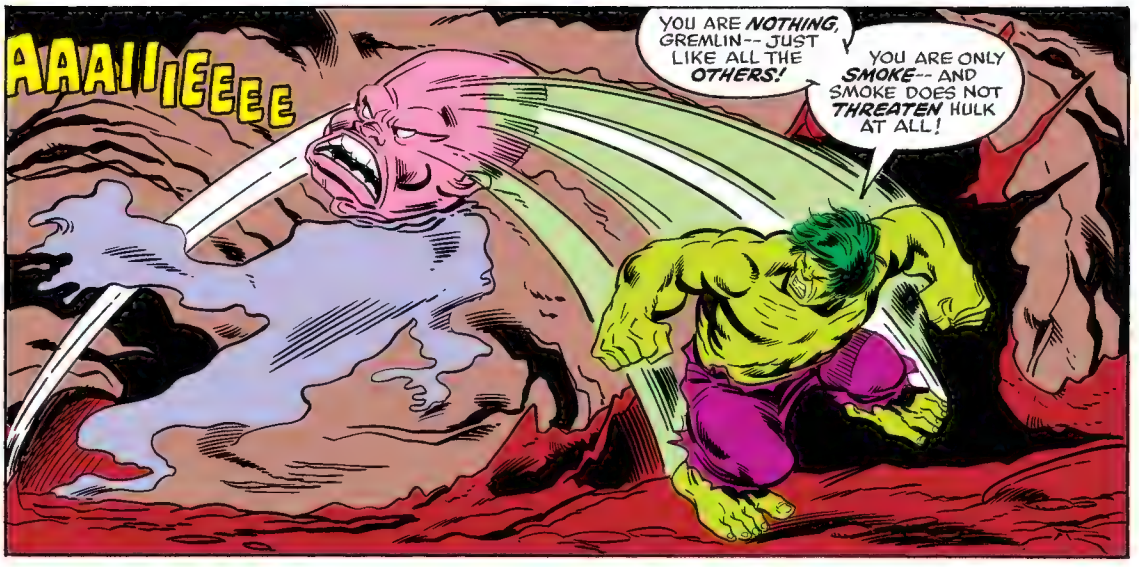
MISTER, THAT ROUTINE IS BECOMING INCREDIBLY MONOTONOUS!
NO--MY RINGS--! YOU'VE CRUSHED THEM INTO...
KRUMP!
KRAK!
AAALIEEE
THAT'S ONE DOWN! NOW WHERE'S THE OTHER...?
HHUUNNHH!!
CHOW!
YOU SHOULD ALWAYS REMEMBER TO PROTECT YOUR REAR, GREENSKIN!
HAVEN'T CHANGED MUCH, SANDMAN--HAVE YOU? YOU'RE STILL THE SAME SNEAKY, UNDER-HANDED, BACK-STABBING...
DON'T WASTE YOUR BREATH, HULK!
STICKS AND STONES MAY BREAK MY BONES, BUT NAMES DON'T EVEN MAKE ME ITCH!
OH?
THEN TRY THIS ON FOR SIZE!
AARRGGHH
CHOOM!
SANDMAN'S FADED AWAY LIKE ALL THE REST OF THEM--
--BUT THE POUNDING IN MY HEAD HAS ONLY GROWN STRONGER!
CAN'T BEAR IT ANY MORE--!
GOT TO GET THIS HELMET OFF-- BEFORE I GO MAD--
SKRAK!
--AND WHEN HULK GETS MAD--
--HULK WILL SMASH!!

WHERE IS HULK NOW? WHAT IS HULK DOING IN THIS SLIMY PLACE?
HULK DOESN'T KNOW--AND HULK DOESN'T LIKE IT!
BUT HULK DOES NOT HAVE TO STAY HERE!
NOT WHEN HULK IS STRONG ENOUGH TO LEAP FAR AWAY!
LORD--NO!
IF THAT MINDLESS MONSTROSITY TRIES ONE OF HIS MILES-SPANNING LEAPS, HE'LL GO THRU TALBOT'S SKULL LIKE A BULLET!
SOMETHING HAS TO BE DONE TO STOP HIM--BUT WHAT?
HOW ABOUT--THIS!?
FRAKK!
STOP WHERE YOU STAND, MONSTER!
SURRENDER SWIFTLY--OR FACE THE BOUNDLESS WRATH OF THE SILVER SURFER!
BAH! SHINY MAN ATTACKS HULK FROM BEHIND--
--BUT HULK WILL SMASH SHINY MAN OUT OF SKY!
PERHAPS YOU COULD, MAN-BRUTE--IF YOU FACED ONLY THE SILVER SURFER!
BUT YOU ALSO FACE IRON MAN!
AND THE SAVAGE SUB-MARINER!
NOT TO MENTION THE PRINCE OF POWER--HERCULES!
AND THE GAMMA-RAY-SPAWNED MIGHT OF--DOC SAMSON!

QUICKLY, IRON MAN-- WE MUST STRIKE BEFORE THE MONSTER CAN REGAIN HIS WITS!
YOU'LL HAVE TO WAIT ONE HECK OF A LONG TIME FOR THAT, SURFER!
THE HULK HAS NEVER HAD ANY WITS TO SPEAK OF!
BAH! FIRST YOU ATTACK HULK--
--AND THEN YOU INSULT HULK!
NO! THE BRUTE HAS STOLEN MY GLEAMING BOARD--!
BE CAREFUL, SURFER! YOU'RE GOING TO...
AARRGGHH
NOBODY LAUGHS AT HULK, LITTLE MEN!
NOBODY!!
SPOW!
HUH? LITTLE MEN FADED AWAY LIKE... LIKE SMOKE!?!
AND NOW FLYING BOARD DISAPPEARS TOO!
BUT HOW? WHY??
THOU HAST FAR MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS TO CONCERN THEE, GROTESQUE ONE!
FOR NOW THOU DOST FACE THE LION OF OLYMPUS--
CHUD!
--AND HERCULES IS POWER INCARNATE!
HAH! BEARDED MAN IS STRONG--
--BUT HULK IS STRONGER!
THOOM!


BAH! NOW THE BEARDED ONE ALSO FADES AWAY LIKE...
HUH?
PERHAPS YOU ARE STRONGER THAN HERCULES, HULK-- BUT YOU AND I HAVE BATTLED MANY TIMES BEFORE--
--AND PRINCE NAMOR IS SECOND TO NO MAN!
WATCH YOURSELF, NAMOR! THE HULK DOESN'T PLAY BY OUR RULES!
THE SUB-MARINER IS NOT A NOVICE, SAMSON! I CAN TAKE CARE OF...
UUHHNN!!
WHUD!
FISH-FACE TALKED-- WHILE HULK STRUCK!
WILL YOU ATTACK HULK TOO, GREEN-HAIR? IF YOU DO, HULK IS WAITING FOR YOU!
BUT I'M NOT AS OVER-CONFIDENT AS THE OTHERS, HULK!
BEFORE I ATTEMPTED TO TAKE YOU, I CALLED IN REINFORCE-MENTS!
I DEFEATED YOU ONCE, HULK-- BUT THIS TIME THE HARPY WILL DESTROY YOU!
ONLY IF HE SURVIVES MY ATTACK FIRST, HARPY-- THE MATCHLESS MENTAL ASSAULT OF MODOK!
DRIVEL! YOUR MENTAL PROWESS PALES TO INSIGNIFICANCE BEFORE THE ALL-CONSUMING INTELLECT OF THE GENIUS WHO ERADICATED GLENN TALBOT'S VERY MIND!
MODOK, YOU ARE A MICROCEPHALIC CRETIN WHEN COMPARED TO-- THE GREMLIN!

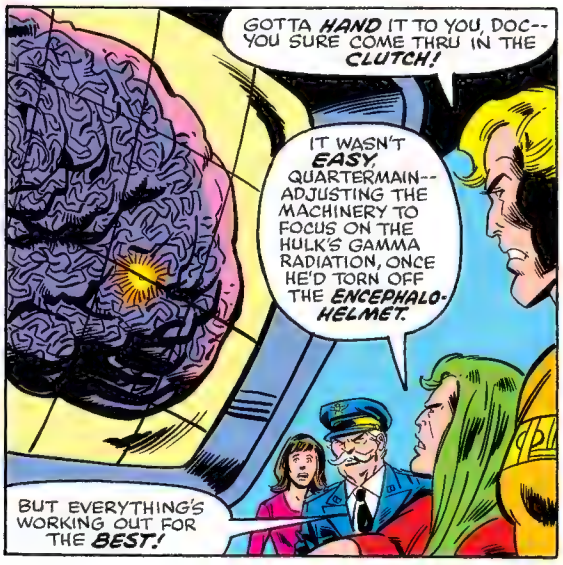
WHILE YOU TWO ARGUE YOUR RESPECTIVE BRILLIANCE, THE HARPY'S HELLBOLTS WILL INCINERATE THE MAN-BRUTE--AND RESOLVE THE PROBLEM!
SKOW!
YOUR HELLBOLTS WILL ACCOMPLISH NOTHING, WOMAN, WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF MY MENTO-BLASTS!
HELLBOLTS! MENTO-BLASTS! UGLY CREATURES WHO ATTACK HULK FOR NO REASON!
HULK IS TIRED OF YOU--
--AND HULK WILL PUT AN END TO YOU--
--NOW!
GO AWAY FROM HULK--ALL OF YOU!
GO BECOME SMOKE LIKE THE OTHERS WHO ATTACKED HULK!
GO AWAY--AND LEAVE HULK ALONE!
YOU'VE DESTROYED THE REST, HULK--
--BUT THE GREMLIN IS THE ONE FOE YOU CAN NEVER DEFEAT!
BAH!!


AAAIIIEEEE
YOU ARE NOTHING, GREMLIN-- JUST LIKE ALL THE OTHERS!
YOU ARE ONLY SMOKE-- AND SMOKE DOES NOT THREATEN HULK AT ALL!

BUT NOW HULK'S ENEMIES ARE ALL GONE!
HULK DOES NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO!

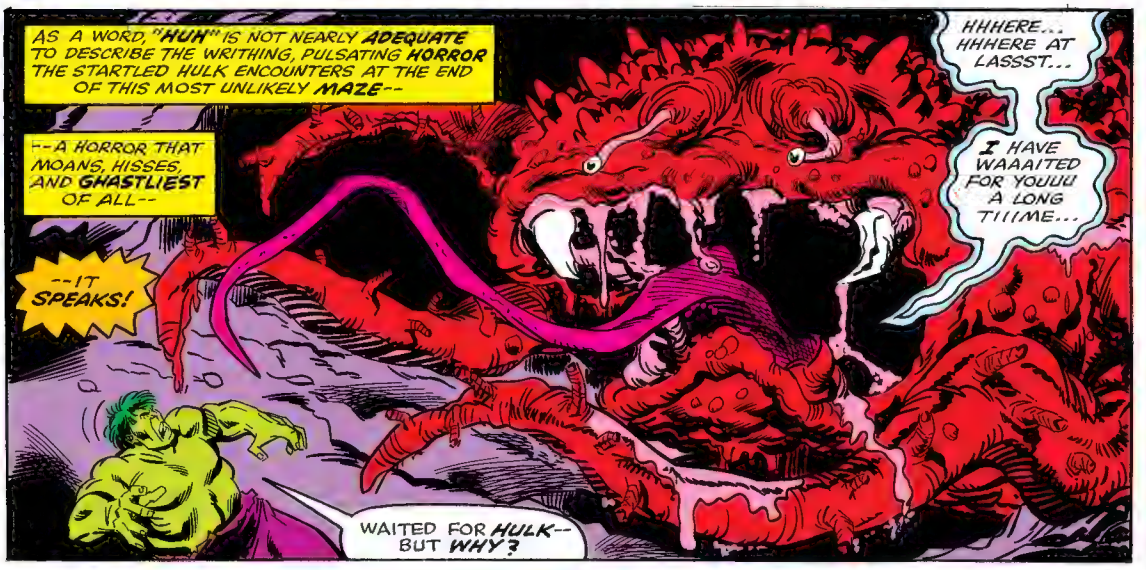
HULK COULD LEAP AWAY FROM HERE--
--BUT HULK DOES NOT EVEN KNOW WHERE HERE IS!

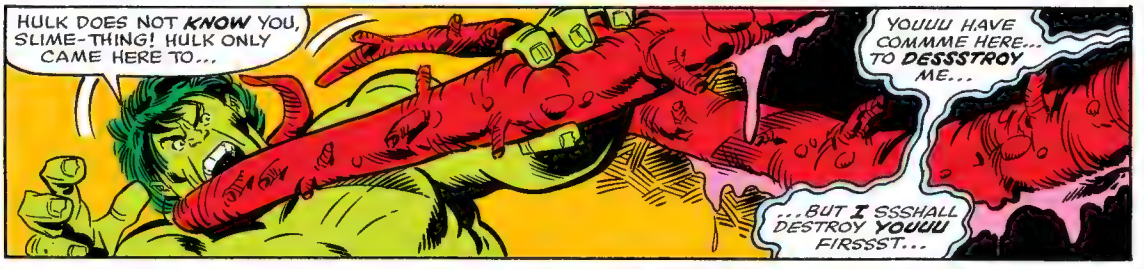
SO HULK WILL KEEP WALKING TILL HULK FINDS OUT--
--OR UNTIL HULK FINDS THE SKY!

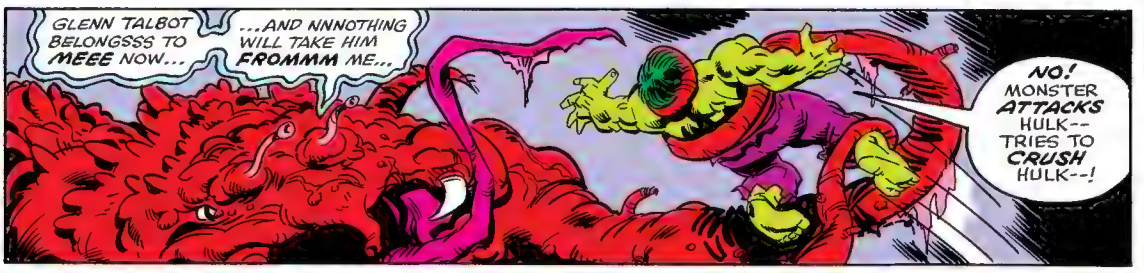

GOTTA HAND IT TO YOU, DOC-- YOU SURE COME THRU IN THE CLUTCH!
IT WASN'T EASY, QUARTERMAIN-- ADJUSTING THE MACHINERY TO FOCUS ON THE HULK'S GAMMA RADIATION, ONCE HE'D TORN OFF THE ENCEPHALO-HELMET.
BUT EVERYTHING'S WORKING OUT FOR THE BEST!

"BELIEVE IT OR NOT, THE MAN-BRUTE IS HEADING EXACTLY WHERE WE WANTED HIM TO GO!"
WALLS OF THIS STRANGE PLACE ARE ALL SOFT... STICKY... AND THERE ARE SO MANY BENDS AND TURNS!

MAYBE THE WAY OUT IS AROUND THE NEXT...
HUH?


AS A WORD, "HUH" IS NOT NEARLY ADEQUATE TO DESCRIBE THE WRITHING, PULSATING HORROR THE STARTLED HULK ENCOUNTERS AT THE END OF THIS MOST UNLIKELY MAZE--
--A HORROR THAT MOANS, HISSES, AND GHASTLIEST OF ALL--
--IT SPEAKS!
HHHERE... HHHERE AT LASSST...
I HAVE WAAAITED FOR YOUUU A LONG TIIIME...
WAITED FOR HULK-- BUT WHY?

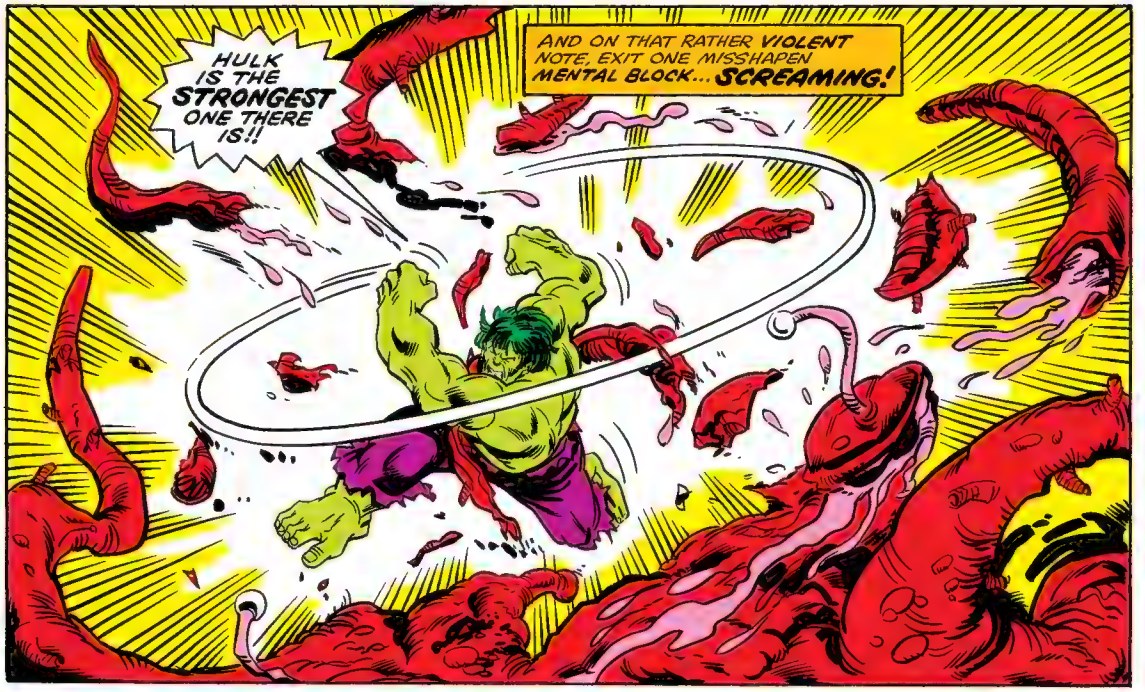

HULK DOES NOT KNOW YOU, SLIME-THING! HULK ONLY CAME HERE TO...
YOUUU HAVE COMMME HERE... TO DESSSTROY ME...
..BUT I SSSHALL DESTROY YOUUU FIRSSST...


GLENN TALBOT BELONGSSS TO MEEE NOW...
...AND NNNOTHING WILL TAKE HIM FROMMM ME...
NO! MONSTER ATTACKS HULK-- TRIES TO CRUSH HULK--!

LEAVE HULK ALONE, MONSTER!
LET HULK GO-- OR HULK WILL SMASH!

YOU WILL SMASHHH NNNOTHING...
YOUUU ARE ONLY SSSOMETHING TO BE DEVOURRRED...SSSO THAT I MAY GROW SSSTRONGER... MORE POWWWERFUL...

SO! MONSTER WANTS TO EAT HULK-- THINKS IT IS STRONGER THAN HULK--
--BUT MONSTER IS WRONG!


HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!!
AND ON THAT RATHER VIOLENT NOTE, EXIT ONE MISSHAPEN MENTAL BLOCK... SCREAMING!

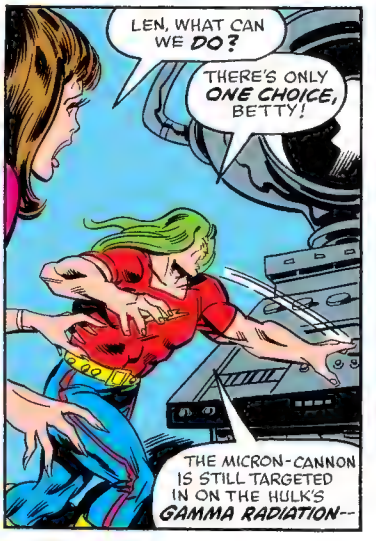
A SCREAM ABRUPTLY ECHOED BY MAJOR GLENN TALBOT, WHO BOLTS UPRIGHT LIKE AN UNCOILING SPRING...
AAAIIEE

...THEN COLLAPSES LIKE A SACK OF MASHED POTATOES!

MY GOD-- THAT HORRIBLE SCREAM! LEN, IS HE...?
NO. DON'T WORRY, BETTY. I DON'T KNOW HOW THE HULK DID IT--BUT THE MENTAL BLOCK SEEMS TO BE GONE!
GLENN TALBOT IS GOING TO BE FINE!

WELL, HE'S ABOUT THE ONLY THING THAT'S FINE, SAMSON!
THE DANGER SIGNAL IS GOING INTO HYSTERICS OVER HERE!
DANGER

WHAT DOES IT MEAN, SAMSON?
IT'S THE ONE THING I NEVER CONSIDERED, GENERAL! WITHOUT THE ENCEPHALO-HELMET TO CONTROL HIS METABOLISM--
--THE HULK IS BEGINNING TO GROW!!


LEN, WHAT CAN WE DO?
THERE'S ONLY ONE CHOICE, BETTY!
THE MICRON-CANNON IS STILL TARGETED IN ON THE HULK'S GAMMA RADIATION--

"--I'VE GOT TO FIRE ANOTHER SHRINK-BLAST--
"--AND PRAY!
"WITHIN MINUTES, THE HULK'S EVER-EXPANDING BODY WILL EXPLODE TALBOT'S BRAIN LIKE AN OVER-RIPE FRUIT--"
HUH? HULK IS GROWING BIGGER--!?!
"--UNLESS PYM'S SHRINKING RAY STRIKES HIM SQUARELY--"
AARRGGHH!!
"--AND REDUCES HIM TO A SIZE WE CAN DEAL WITH!"
D-DID IT WORK, LEN?
ONLY TOO WELL, I'M AFRAID.
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN, SAMSON?
IT MEANS I CAN'T PICK UP THE HULK ON MY SCANNERS ANY MORE!
IT MEANS THE MICRON-CANNON SHRANK HIM BEYOND THE POINT OF RETRIEVAL!
IT REDUCED THE HULK TO NOTHING-NESS!
BY THUNDER, SAMSON-- THERE MUST BE SOMETHING WE CAN DO TO...
B-B-BETTY?
GLENN?
GLENN!
OH, DARLING-- YOU'RE ALL RIGHT! YOU CAN SPEAK AGAIN! YOU CAN THINK!
E-EVERYTHING'S SO HAZY... FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN ASLEEP FOR SO LONG... DREAMING SUCH HORRIBLE DREAMS!
WH-WHAT HAPPENED? WHO BROUGHT ME BACK FROM THE DEAD?
ONE OF THE BRAVEST MEN I'VE EVER KNOWN, MAJOR TALBOT.
YOU OWE YOUR LIFE TO BRUCE BANNER!
BRUCE BANNER... AND THE HULK!
NEXT ISSUE
SHOCK FOLLOWS SHOCK AS JADE-JAWS BATTLES THE MOST UNEXPECTED BARBARIAN OF ALL! BE HERE FOR...
"THE SWORD AND THE SORCERER!"

STILL ONLY 25¢
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
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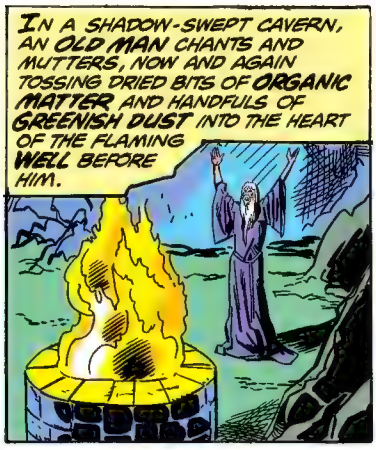
02456
THE INCREDIBLE HULK
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
LET THE TRIAL BY COMBAT BEGIN!!
THE BATTLE ONLY ONE OF US WILL SURVIVE!
SHOCK FOLLOWS SHOCK AS THE HULK BATTLES THE MOST UNEXPECTED BARBARIAN OF ALL!!
BUCKLER
ROMITA

Caught in the heart of a *Nuclear Explosion*, victim of *Gamma Radiation* gone wild, *Doctor Robert Bruce Banner* now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered *Fury*—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!™

LEN WEIN WRITER/EDITOR / SAL BUSCEMA & JOE STATON ILLUSTRATORS / GLYNIS WEIN colorist / JOHN COSTANZA letterer / MARV WOLFMAN BACK-SEAT BARBARIAN

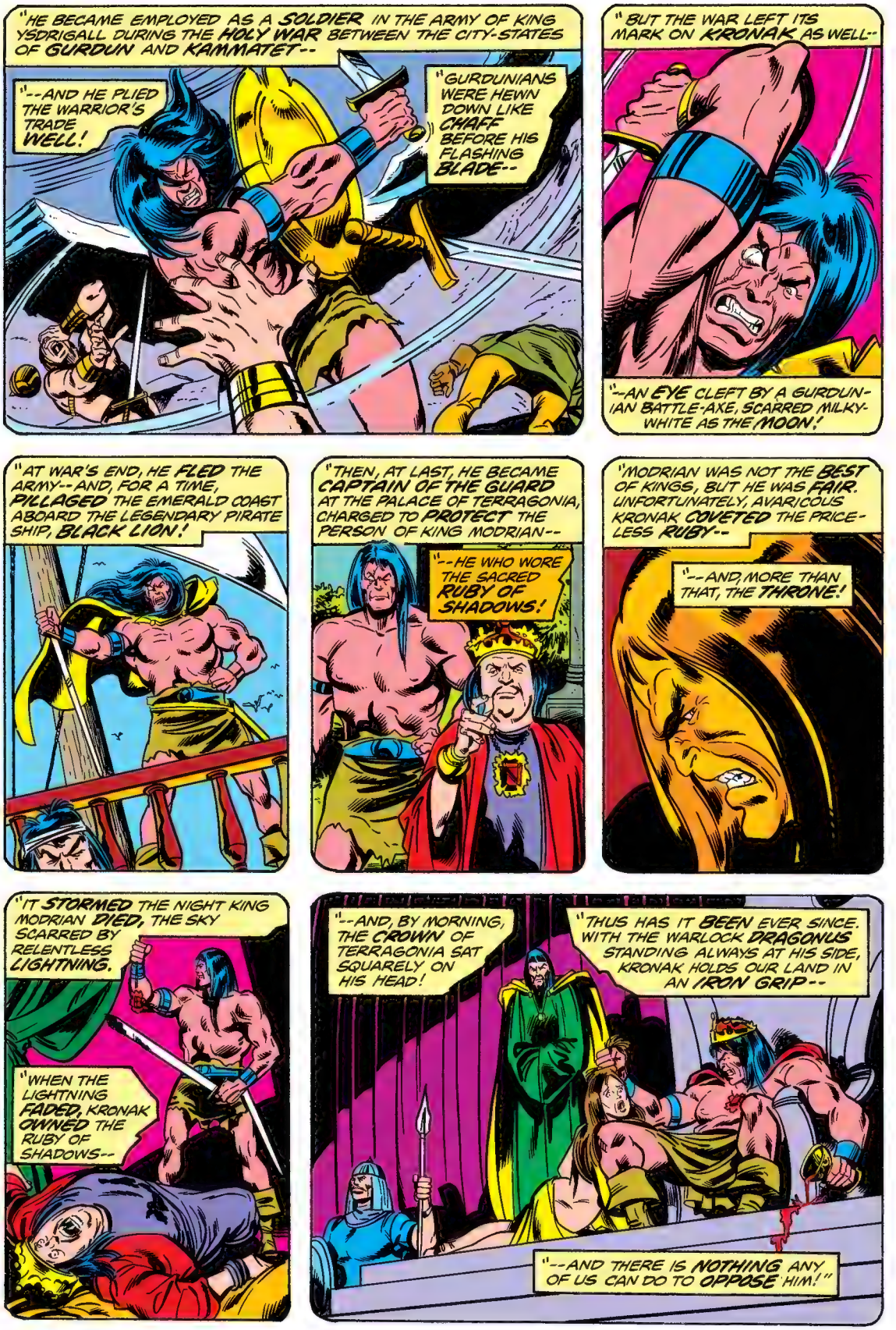

IN A SHADOW-SWEPT CAVERN, AN OLD MAN CHANTS AND MUTTERS, NOW AND AGAIN TOSSING DRIED BITS OF ORGANIC MATTER AND HANDFULS OF GREENISH DUST INTO THE HEART OF THE FLAMING WELL BEFORE HIM.

FOR MANY DAYS, HE HAS PRAYED TO THE ANCIENT GODS, BEGGING THEM TO SEND FORTH A CHAMPION TO DEFEND HIS POOR, OPPRESSED PEOPLE.
NO! IT CAN'T BE--!

TODAY, HIS PRAYERS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED!
WHERE IS HULK NOW? WHO HAS BROUGHT HULK TO THIS STRANGE PLACE?
The SWORD and the SORCERER!
BY DROX! THE GODS HAVE SENT US A...A MONSTER!

O DEMONIC ONE, WE THANK THE ANCIENT GODS FOR DELIVERING YOU TO US IN OUR HOUR OF MOST GRIEVOUS NEED--
--THAT YOU MIGHT SMITE DOWN OUR OPPRESSOR--AND FREE US!
BAH! TALK SO HULK CAN UNDERSTAND YOU, OLD MAN!
HOW DID YOU BRING HULK HERE? HOW DID YOU MAKE HULK SMALL ENOUGH TO FALL THRU THE SPACES BETWEEN THE WORLDS?
I? BUT I DID NOTHING! IT WAS THE GODS WHO...*
*ACTUALLY, IT WAS DOC SAMSON WHO REDUCED JADE-JAWS TO SUB-MICROSCOPIC SIZE LAST ISSUE, TO SAVE THE LIFE OF GLENN TALBOT.--LEN.
PFAH! OLD MAN LIES TO HULK! OLD MAN CALLED HULK HERE WHEN HULK DID NOT WANT TO COME, AND NOW HULK WILL...
HUH?
"PUNY HUMANS! CAVE IS FULL OF PUNY HUMANS CARRYING CLUBS!"
BE YOU DEMON OR SAINT, YOU CANNOT LAY HANDS ON SHAMU-SHAN IN ANGER!
PLEASE, GIANT ONE--STAND YOU BACK! DO NOT FORCE US TO STRIKE YOU!
KKRAKK!!
SO! LITTLE MEN ARE JUST LIKE ALL THE REST!
THEY TRY TO ATTACK HULK!
GO AWAY, PUNY HUMANS! IF YOU HIT HULK--
--HULK WILL HIT YOU BACK!
PLEASE, MIGHTY ONE--STOP!

SNARLING, THE JADE BEHEMOTH WHIRLS--
BUT THE AGED WIZARD'S WORDS ARE SO SOOTHING, SO SUPPLICATING, SO FILLED WITH HONEST URGENCY--
--THAT AT LAST, ALMOST RELUCTANTLY, THE GREEN GOLIATH LOWERS HIS ROUGH-HEWN BLUDGEON... AND SPEAKS!
YOU BROUGHT HULK HERE TO HELP YOU... TO BE YOUR... CHAMPION?
TALK MORE, OLD MAN. HULK WILL LISTEN.
BUT IF PUNY HUMANS TRY TO ATTACK HULK AGAIN, HULK WILL CRUSH THEM ALL--
--LIKE THIS!!
PLEASE, GREAT DEMON --NO MORE VIOLENCE!
KKRRUNCHH!
HULK IS NOT DEMON, OLD MAN. HULK IS HULK!
THE STORY IS A LONG ONE, MY FRIEND--LONG AND MOST TERRIBLY GRIM.
NOW TELL HULK WHY HULK SHOULD HELP YOU!
YONDER LIES THE CASTLE OF THE BLOODY-HANDED DESPOT WHO NOW RULES US!
HE WHO STOLE THE GOLDEN THRONE OF TERRAGONIA THRU VIOLENCE AND DECEIT--
--AND WHO HOLDS IT WITH THE SAME SAVAGE FERVOR!
LEND A TIRED OLD MAN YOUR EAR, MY FRIEND--AND I SHALL TELL YOU OF A KING WHO REVELS IN ABUSING HIS SUBJECTS!
LISTEN CLOSE AND I SHALL TELL YOU OF-- KRONAK THE BARBARIAN!
"FROM THE FRIGID NORTHLANDS HE FIRST CAME, MY FRIEND-- HIS AGE LESS THAN TWENTY WINTERS, BUT HIS EYES ALREADY FAR OLDER THAN TIME.
"HE HAD PASSED HIS BAPTISM OF BLOOD AND FLAME ON THE SLOPES OF DISTANT AGARON IN THE SUMMER BEFORE--
"--AND NOW SOUGHT TO MAKE HIS WAY IN THE WORLD AS A SWORD-WIELDING MERCENARY!

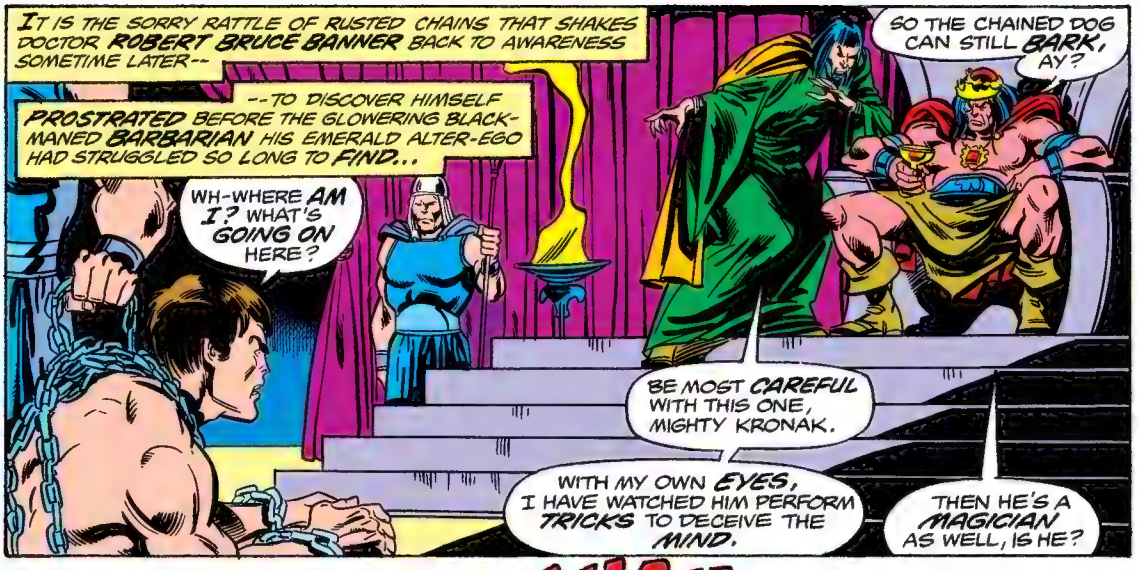

"HE BECAME EMPLOYED AS A SOLDIER IN THE ARMY OF KING YSDRIGALL DURING THE HOLY WAR BETWEEN THE CITY-STATES OF GURDUN AND KAMMATET--
"--AND HE PLIED THE WARRIOR'S TRADE WELL!
"GURDUNIANS WERE HEWN DOWN LIKE CHAFF BEFORE HIS FLASHING BLADE--
"BUT THE WAR LEFT ITS MARK ON KRONAK AS WELL--
"--AN EYE CLEFT BY A GURDUNIAN BATTLE-AXE, SCARRED MILKY-WHITE AS THE MOON!
"AT WAR'S END, HE FLED THE ARMY--AND, FOR A TIME, PILLAGED THE EMERALD COAST ABOARD THE LEGENDARY PIRATE SHIP, BLACK LION!
"THEN, AT LAST, HE BECAME CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD AT THE PALACE OF TERRAGONIA, CHARGED TO PROTECT THE PERSON OF KING MODRIAN--
"--HE WHO WORE THE SACRED RUBY OF SHADOWS!
"MODRIAN WAS NOT THE BEST OF KINGS, BUT HE WAS FAIR. UNFORTUNATELY, AVARICOUS KRONAK COVETED THE PRICELESS RUBY--
"--AND, MORE THAN THAT, THE THRONE!
"IT STORMED THE NIGHT KING MODRIAN DIED, THE SKY SCARRED BY RELENTLESS LIGHTNING.
"WHEN THE LIGHTNING FADED, KRONAK OWNED THE RUBY OF SHADOWS--
"--AND, BY MORNING, THE CROWN OF TERRAGONIA SAT SQUARELY ON HIS HEAD!
"THUS HAS IT BEEN EVER SINCE. WITH THE WARLOCK DRAGONUS STANDING ALWAYS AT HIS SIDE, KRONAK HOLDS OUR LAND IN AN IRON GRIP--
"--AND THERE IS NOTHING ANY OF US CAN DO TO OPPOSE HIM!"

THAT IS WHY WE SUMMONED YOU, MY FRIEND.
ONLY ONE WITH YOUR POWER COULD HOPE TO STAND AGAINST KRONAK'S TYRANNY!
BAH! WHY SHOULD HULK FIGHT FOR YOU, OLD MAN?
PLEASE, MIGHTY ONE-- YOU ARE OUR LAST CHANCE!
IF YOU DO NOT DEFEAT KRONAK, ALL HOPE IS LOST FOR THE PEOPLE OF TERRAGONIA!
OUR LAND WILL SHRIVEL UP AND DIE!
THEN LET IT! IT IS NOT HULK'S PROBLEM!
HULK ONLY WANTS TO BE LEFT ALONE!
W-WE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN. NOBODY CAN HELP US.
HUH?
N-NOBODY'S STRONG ENOUGH TO BEAT THE EVIL KING KRONAK!
LITTLE GIRL LIES!
HULK IS STRONGER THAN KRONAK!
HULK IS STRONGER THAN ANYONE!
HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!
AND HULK WILL PROVE IT!
BEHOLD! THE MIGHTY ONE GOES TO KRONAK'S CASTLE AFTER ALL!
THEN MAY THE BLESSINGS OF DROX GO WITH YOU, MY FRIEND!
I FEAR YOU WILL SORELY NEED THEM!

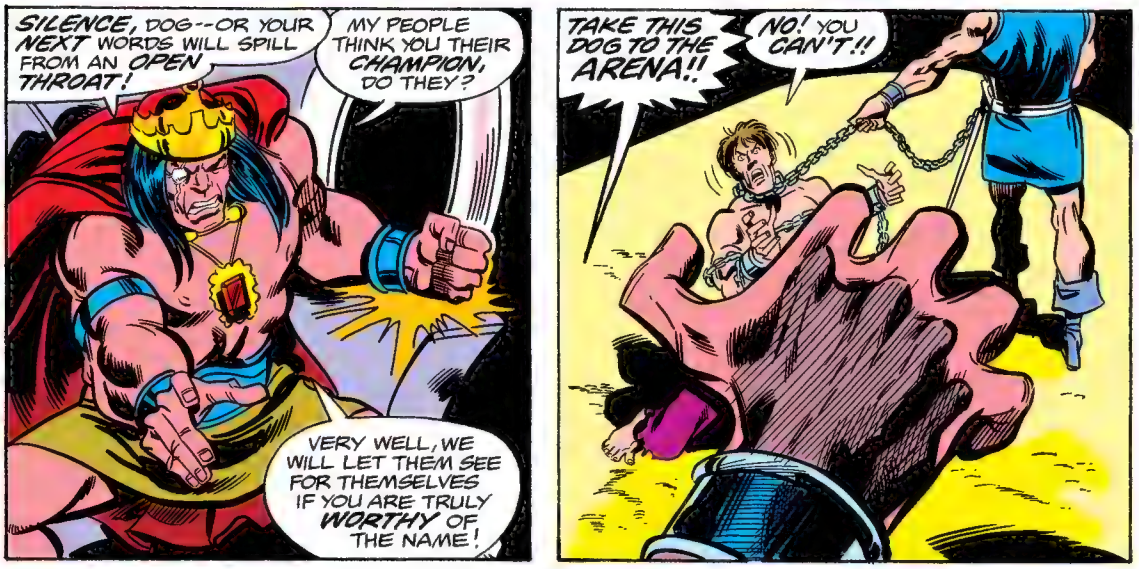
TWO LEAPS AND A BOUND LATER...
HULK IS HERE!
NOW WHERE IS KRONAK?
YOU-- DOWN THERE IN THE SHADOWS-- WHAT DO YOU WANT HERE?
HULK WANTS KRONAK!
SHOW HULK THE ONE THEY SAY IS STRONGER THAN HULK!
FOOL! IF EVER KING KRONAK WISHES TO SEE YOU, YOU WILL BE SUMMONED!
NOW GO AWAY, DOG-- WHILE YOU STILL CAN!
NO! LET HULK IN, LITTLE MEN!
LET HULK IN-- BEFORE YOU MAKE HULK MAD!
DOG, YOU ARE ALREADY MAD!
AND MAD DOGS SHOULD BE PUT TO DEATH!
SKRAK!
HUH?
HULK WARNED LITTLE MEN--
--BUT, LIKE ALWAYS, THEY DID NOT LISTEN!
SKRA-KOOOMM!!
PUNY HUMANS, HULK GETS WHAT HULK WANTS--
--AND HULK WANTS IN!!

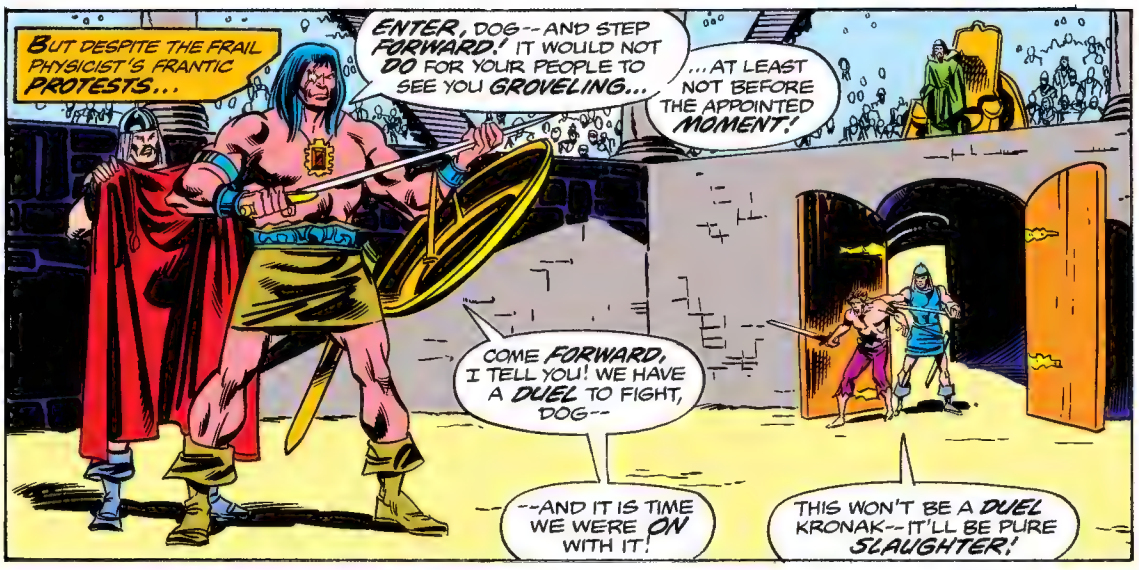
NOW HULK WILL ASK YOU ONE LAST TIME, LITTLE MEN!
WHERE IS KRONAK?
WHERE IS THE ONE HULK MUST SMASH?
BY DROX! THE CASTLE HAS BEEN ASSAULTED BY.. A DEMON!
QUICKLY, CAT-BROTHERS-- BEFORE THE VILE CREATURE CAN REACH KING KRONAK'S THRONE ROOM--!
B-BUT, CAPTAIN, LOOK AT THE SIZE OF HIM! HOW DOES ONE SLAY A BEHEMOTH SUCH AS THAT?
SLAY HIM-- NOW!!
HOW ELSE, YOU QUIVERING JELLYFISH? WITH THE SLASHING BLADE OF A GOOD STURDY SWORD, OR THE JAGGED POINT OF...
BY DROX! THE STRONGEST NEKRANNIAN STEEL MERELY SHATTERS UPON THE DEMON'S CHEST!?!
BAH! HULK TOLD OTHER PUNY HUMANS THIS BEFORE, LITTLE MAN!
HULK IS NOT DEMON!
HULK IS HULK!!
AND, APPARENTLY, THAT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH!
FURIOUSLY, THE MASSIVE MAN-BRUTE LUMBERS ACROSS THE RUBBLE-STREWN COURTYARD, SCATTERING THE CASTLE'S GUARDIANS BEFORE HIM LIKE SO MANY TEMPEST-TOSSED LEAVES.
PUNY HUMANS, GET OUT OF HULK'S WAY!
HIS PROGRESS DOES NOT GO UNOBSERVED.
IN THE SHADOWS OF THE GALLERY ABOVE, THE WARLOCK CALLED DRAGONUS PEERS SOLEMNLY DOWN AT THE CHAOS REIGNING BELOW HIM--
--AND, HIS DARK EYES NARROWING, PLUCKS A DELICATE VIAL FROM THE VOLUMINOUS FOLDS OF HIS SORCERER'S ROBE--

--THEN, ALMOST CONTEMPTUOUSLY, HE HURLS THE GLISTENING OBJECT OUT ACROSS THE COURTYARD--
--TO LAND, WITH A TINKLE OF BROKEN GLASS, AT THE VERY FEET OF A BEWILDERED HULK!
HUH?
THE RESULT OF THE SOFT EXPLOSION IS IMMEDIATE--AND DISASTEROUS!
MORTAR INSTANTLY DISINTEGRATED BY THE SWIRLING SORCEROUS FUMES, A HUGE SECTION OF THE CASTLE'S OUTER RAMPART COLLAPSES--
--BURYING THE GREEN GOLIATH BENEATH TONS OF DIRT AND STONE!
THE HULK'S FINAL FRUSTRATED SNARL IS LOST AMIDST THE SAVAGE THUNDER OF FALLING ROCK--
--AND THE STRIDENT VOICE OF DRAGONUS SWIFTLY RISES IN ITS PLACE.
QUICKLY, GUARDS--MOVE AWAY THE RUBBLE!
THE DEMON MAY YET BE ALIVE UNDER ALL THAT!
BUT WHEN THE GRANITE COVERLET HAS BEEN PULLED ASIDE...
BY THE SEVEN SUNS!
IT CANNOT BE--!
"THE EMERALD DEMON HAS VANISHED--
"--AND LEFT A PALE PINK CHANGELING IN ITS PLACE!"
SO THIS IS THE ONE THOSE IMBECILIC PEASANTS SENT FORTH TO FREE THEM FROM OUR RULE, EH?
GUARDS, TAKE THIS DOG TO MIGHTY KRONAK!
I THINK OUR KING WOULD RATHER ENJOY SEEING FOR HIMSELF THE--AH--QUALITY OF HIS ENEMIES!


IT IS THE SORRY RATTLE OF RUSTED CHAINS THAT SHAKES DOCTOR ROBERT BRUCE BANNER BACK TO AWARENESS SOMETIME LATER--
--TO DISCOVER HIMSELF PROSTRATED BEFORE THE GLOWERING BLACK-MANED BARBARIAN HIS EMERALD ALTER-EGO HAD STRUGGLED SO LONG TO FIND...
WH-WHERE AM I? WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
SO THE CHAINED DOG CAN STILL BARK, AY?
BE MOST CAREFUL WITH THIS ONE, MIGHTY KRONAK.
WITH MY OWN EYES, I HAVE WATCHED HIM PERFORM TRICKS TO DECEIVE THE MIND.
THEN HE'S A MAGICIAN AS WELL, IS HE?

MORE THAN THAT, MY KING--HE IS THE SUPPOSED CHAMPION FOR WHOM YOU UNAPPRECIATIVE SUBJECTS HAVE SO LONG BEEN PRAYING!
THIS ONE?
HAHAHAHAHA
THEY MIGHT AS WELL HAVE SENT A FLEA TO SLAY AN ELEPHANT!
WHAT AN OUTRAGEOUS JEST!
I'M WARNING YOU, MISTER--IT'S NOT FUNNY!
I REALLY DON'T REMEMBER HOW I GOT HERE, BUT WHOEVER YOU ARE, YOU'D BETTER GO EASY ON ME--
--OR YOU'LL REGRET IT!

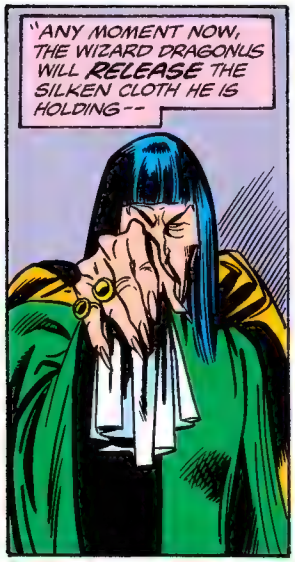

SILENCE, DOG--OR YOUR NEXT WORDS WILL SPILL FROM AN OPEN THROAT!
MY PEOPLE THINK YOU THEIR CHAMPION, DO THEY?
VERY WELL, WE WILL LET THEM SEE FOR THEMSELVES IF YOU ARE TRULY WORTHY OF THE NAME!
TAKE THIS DOG TO THE ARENA!!
NO! YOU CAN'T!!

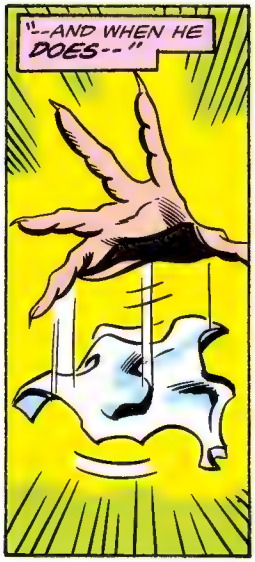

BUT DESPITE THE FRAIL PHYSICIST'S FRANTIC PROTESTS...
ENTER, DOG--AND STEP FORWARD! IT WOULD NOT DO FOR YOUR PEOPLE TO SEE YOU GROVELING...
...AT LEAST NOT BEFORE THE APPOINTED MOMENT!
COME FORWARD, I TELL YOU! WE HAVE A DUEL TO FIGHT, DOG--
--AND IT IS TIME WE WERE ON WITH IT!
THIS WON'T BE A DUEL KRONAK--IT'LL BE PURE SLAUGHTER!

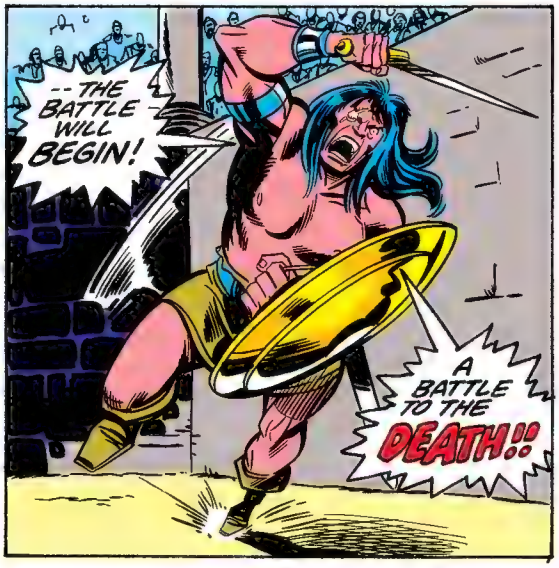
I CAN BARELY EVEN LIFT THIS SWORD YOU GAVE ME!
HOW IN BLAZES DO YOU EXPECT ME TO DEFEND MYSELF?
IN SANITY'S NAME, BARBARIAN--CALL OFF THIS FARCE WHILE THERE'S STILL TIME!

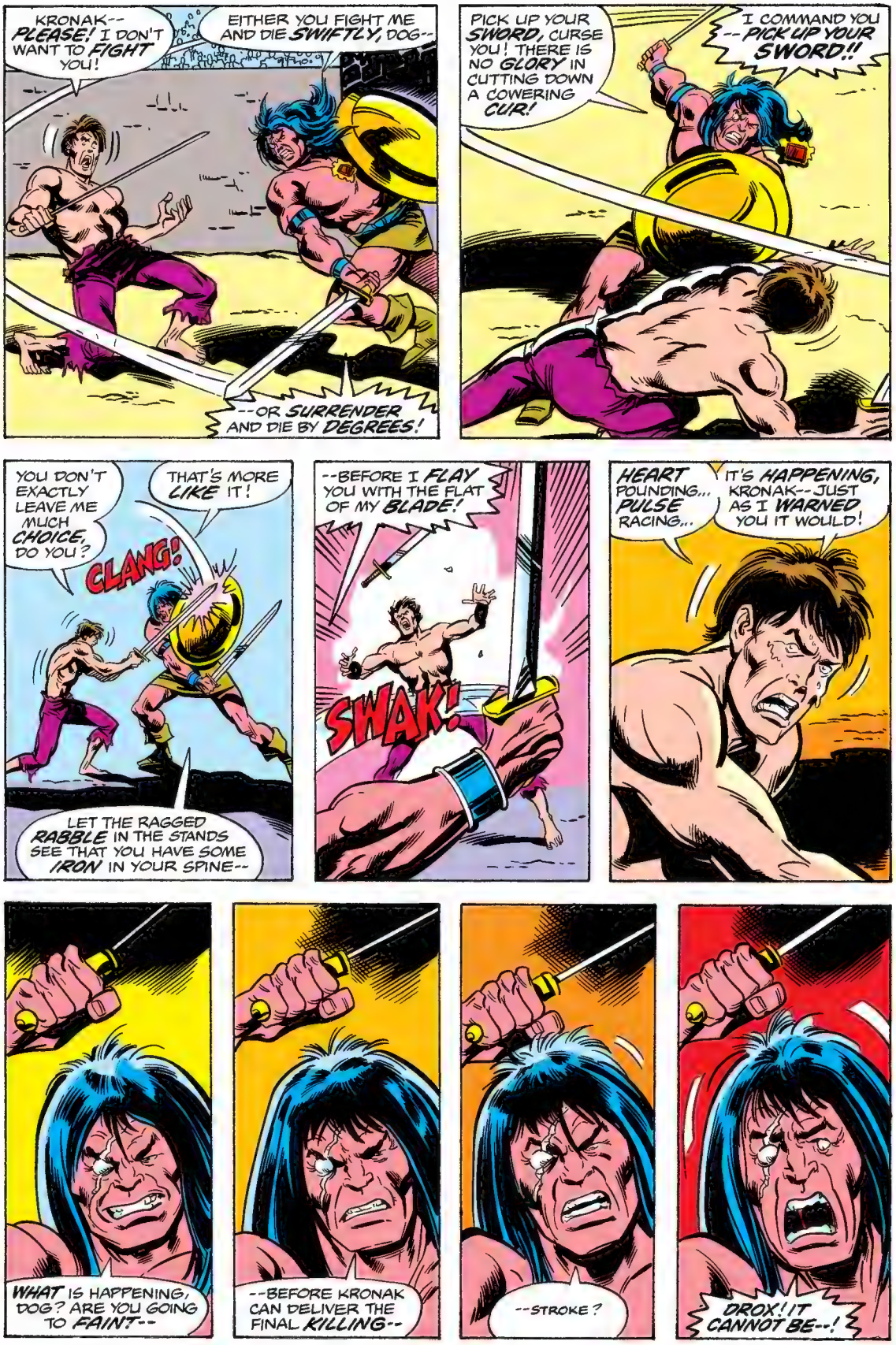
BELIEVE ME, KRONAK--I'M NOT THE CHAMPION YOUR PEOPLE SENT TO DESTROY YOU--
--BUT IF YOU START MY PULSE RACING, YOU'LL BE SORRY NONETHELESS!

YOU NEEDN'T WORRY, DOG. YOU'LL NOT HAVE A PULSE MUCH LONGER!
THE MAN DOES NOT LIVE WHO CAN DEFEAT KRONAK IN COMBAT!


"ANY MOMENT NOW, THE WIZARD DRAGONUS WILL RELEASE THE SILKEN CLOTH HE IS HOLDING--


"--AND WHEN HE DOES--"


--THE BATTLE WILL BEGIN!
A BATTLE TO THE DEATH!!


KRONAK-- PLEASE! I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT YOU!
EITHER YOU FIGHT ME AND DIE SWIFTLY, DOG--
--OR SURRENDER AND DIE BY DEGREES!
PICK UP YOUR SWORD, CURSE YOU! THERE IS NO GLORY IN CUTTING DOWN A COWERING CUR!
I COMMAND YOU -- PICK UP YOUR SWORD!!
YOU DON'T EXACTLY LEAVE ME MUCH CHOICE, DO YOU?
THAT'S MORE LIKE IT!
CLANG!
LET THE RAGGED RABBLE IN THE STANDS SEE THAT YOU HAVE SOME IRON IN YOUR SPINE--
--BEFORE I FLAY YOU WITH THE FLAT OF MY BLADE!
SWAK!
HEART POUNDING... PULSE RACING...
IT'S HAPPENING, KRONAK-- JUST AS I WARNED YOU IT WOULD!
WHAT IS HAPPENING, DOG? ARE YOU GOING TO FAINT--
--BEFORE KRONAK CAN DELIVER THE FINAL KILLING--
--STROKE?
DROX! IT CANNOT BE--!

SO YOU ARE KRONAK!
YOU ARE THE ONE HULK HAS COME HERE TO SMASH!
DRAGONUS SPOKE TRUE! YOU ARE A DEMON!
BUT NOTHING CAN STAND BEFORE THE SLASHING BLADE OF...
DROX! MY SWORD SPLINTERS AGAINST YOUR SKIN!
SPRAKT!
STAY AWAY FROM ME, DEMON!
STAY AWAY!!
FOR THE LAST TIME, LITTLE MAN--
--HULK IS NOT DEMON!!
PLOW!
WHATEVER YOU ARE, CREATURE--YOU WILL NOT DEFEAT KRONAK!
FOR MONTHS, I HAVE WORN THE SACRED RUBY OF SHADOWS --A GEM POSSESSED OF GREAT MYSTIC POWERS!
NOW THE TIME HAS FINALLY COME TO PUT THOSE POWERS TO USE!
SHADOWS DARK AS BLACKEST NIGHT, DWELLERS IN THE RUBY GEM, I SUMMON THESE NOW FORTH TO FIGHT, FOR KRONAK HAS GREAT NEED OF THEM!
HUH?
RED SMOKE FROM JEWEL IS CHANGING-- TAKING ON NEW SHAPE-- TURNING INTO--

--THE ENCHANTED GUARDIAN OF THE GEM--GIVEN FORM BY THE SHADOW-RUBY--GIVEN SUB-STANCE BY MY WILL--GIVEN PURPOSE BY MY FURY!
BAH! KRONAK IS AFRAID TO FACE HULK HIMSELF! HE SENDS STUPID MONSTER IN HIS PLACE!
BUT IF PUNY MONSTER ATTACKS HULK, HULK WILL...
SMASH!
SO! MONSTER IS STRONGER THAN HULK THOUGHT--
--BUT NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO HURT HULK!
NOTHING IS STRONG ENOUGH TO HURT HULK, MONSTER!
NOTHING!!
THE ARENA TREMBLES WITH THE FORCE OF THE SUDDEN IMPACT, THE HARD-PACKED DIRT SPRAYING BILLOWING CLOUDS OF DUST HIGH INTO THE AIR, DUST STAINED COPPER WITH THE BLOOD OF THOSE WHO HAVE CLASHED IN THIS ARENA BEFORE.

BUT BEFORE THE MAN-BRUTE'S MASSIVE EMERALD FISTS CAN STRIKE THEIR TARGET AGAIN...
HUH? MONSTER GRABS HULK'S ARMS--
--BUT MONSTER WILL NOT HOLD HULK FOR LONG!
WE WILL SEE ABOUT THAT, CREATURE,.. WE WILL SEE!

FOR INTERMINABLE MOMENTS, THE GRIM TABLEAU REMAINS UNCHANGED--
--TWO MONSTROUS FIGURES LOCKED IN A STALEMATE SO INTENSE, THEY SEEM MORE LIKE GAUDILY-PAINTED STATUES THAN LIVING BEINGS!

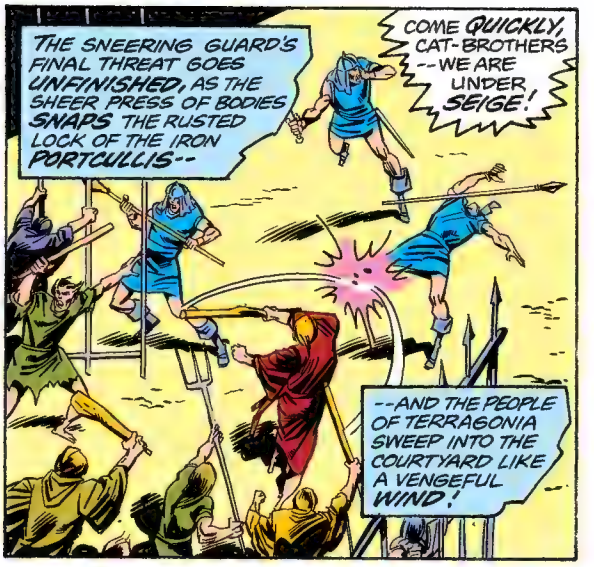
THE HULK STRAINS MIGHTILY-- BUT FUTILELY-- HIS BOUNDLESS RAGE GROWING WITH EVERY INSTANT--
--WHILE OFF TO THE SIDE, KING KRONAK GRINS MALEVOLENTLY, SECURE IN THE KNOWLEDGE THE BATTLE IS ALMOST WON--

--BUT PERHAPS THE BARBARIAN WOULD NOT BE SO CONFIDENT, IF HE KNEW WHAT WE KNOW--
--THAT THE MADDER HULK GETS, THE STRONGER HE GETS--

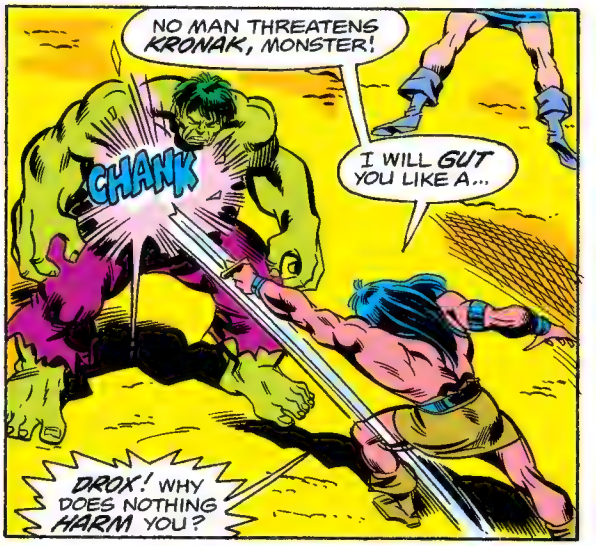
--AND FRANKLY, THE GREEN GOLIATH'S ANGER RIGHT NOW WOULD BURN OUT A WHOLE BLAMED BANK OF SEISMOGRAPHS!
MONSTER-- LET--HULK-- GO!!

DESPITE ALL OUTWARD APPEARANCES, WHAT YOU HAVE JUST WITNESSED HERE HAS BEEN A BATTLE OF WILLS -- THE SAVAGE DETERMINATION OF A NEAR-MINDLESS MAN-BRUTE VERSUS THE RELENTLESS RESOLVE OF A BLOODY-HANDED BARBARIAN!
CHOOM!
WE NEED NOT MENTION WHICH OF THE TWO HAS BEEN VICTORIOUS!
DROX! THE CREATURE'S FURY IS SO GREAT, IT HAS SHATTERED THE RUBY OF SHADOWS--
--AND THE GEM'S GUARDIAN HAS VANISHED BACK INTO THE MISTS!
NOW, KRONAK-- NOTHING STANDS BETWEEN YOU AND HULK!
PUNY HUMANS SAID YOU WERE STRONGER THAN HULK--
--NOW HULK WANTS YOU TO PROVE IT!
NO, CREATURE-- I WILL NOT FIGHT YOU!
NOT NOW!
NOT EVER!
LOOK, BEHIND YOU, MONSTER-- AND SEE YOUR DOOM!
QUICKLY, CAT-BROTHERS-- SURROUND THE BEAST!
LAST TIME WE FOUGHT, THE CREATURE HAD THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE ON ITS SIDE!
THIS TIME WE WILL DESTROY IT!!
DON'T LITTLE MEN EVER LEARN?
HOW MANY TIMES MUST HULK SMASH YOU BEFORE YOU WILL LEAVE HULK ALONE?

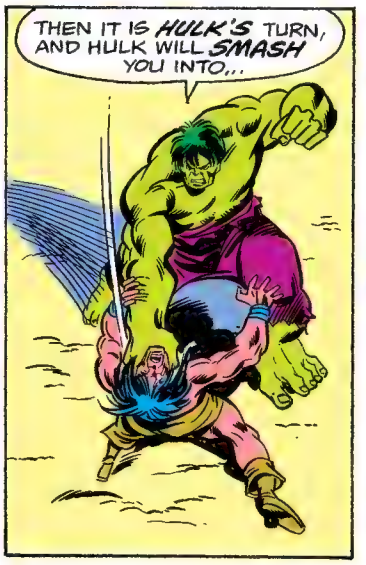
THE MAN-BRUTE'S FRENZIED FRUSTRATION IS ECHOED BY THOSE WHO MULL ABOUT OUTSIDE THE CASTLE GATES--
--THOSE WHO HAD SENT THE HULK HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE!
LET US IN, CURSE YOU-- LET US IN!
GO AWAY, DOG, OR MY SPEAR WILL...


THE SNEERING GUARD'S FINAL THREAT GOES UNFINISHED, AS THE SHEER PRESS OF BODIES SNAPS THE RUSTED LOCK OF THE IRON PORTCULLIS--
COME QUICKLY, CAT-BROTHERS --WE ARE UNDER SEIGE!
--AND THE PEOPLE OF TERRAGONIA SWEEP INTO THE COURTYARD LIKE A VENGEFUL WIND!

"KRONAK," THEY CRY AS A SINGLE VOICE-- BUT ONE VOICE OVERWHELMS THEM ALL!
KRONAK! YOU WILL FIGHT HULK, KRONAK--
--OR HULK WILL CRUSH YOU LIKE A BUG!


NO MAN THREATENS KRONAK, MONSTER!
CHANK
I WILL GUT YOU LIKE A...
DROK! WHY DOES NOTHING HARM YOU?

IF I MUST, I WILL SLAY YOU WITH MY BARE HANDS! I WILL...
I WILL...
PAK!
ARE YOU DONE, KRONAK?


THEN IT IS HULK'S TURN, AND HULK WILL SMASH YOU INTO...

KRONAK! KRONAK! KRONAK!
HUH? PUNY HUMAN'S CALL KRONAK'S NAME?

WELL, IF LITTLE MEN WANT KRONAK SO BADLY--
--THEY CAN HAVE HIM!
NOOOOOO
THE MAN-BRUTE'S SCREAMING "GIFT" IS GREETED WITH OPEN ARMS--
--AND SOON--THE SCREAMING STOPS.
AND WHEN THE FEW GUARDS STILL LEFT STANDING HAVE SCATTERED IN BLIND PANIC...
THE WARLOCK DRAGONUS FLED THE CASTLE WHEN HE REALIZED THE TIDE HAD TURNED AGAINST HIM!
--BUT WE WILL FIND HIM--AND DEAL WITH HIM!
BUT WHAT OF YOU, MY FRIEND? WHAT WILL YOU DO NOW?
HULK DOES NOT KNOW. HULK IS LOST IN THIS STRANGE PLACE. WHERE DOES HULK GO NEXT?
THE ANSWER TO THAT INNOCENT QUERY IS DISCONCERTING, TO SAY THE LEAST!
HUH? IT IS HAPPENING AGAIN!
HULK IS SHRINKING--GETTING SMALLER--!
BY THE BEARDS OF THE ANCIENT GODS!
OUR CHAMPION IS DWINDLING AWAY... TO... TO...
...NOTHINGNESS.
NOTHING REMAINS TO MARK THE MIGHTY ONE'S PASSING...
...SAVE THIS SHATTERED FRAGMENT OF THE RUBY OF SHADOWS!
IT IS NOT MUCH TO COMMEMORATE THE FALL OF AN EMPIRE--
--BUT I SUPPOSE IT WILL HAVE TO DO!
NEXT ISSUE:
THE LONG-AWAITED RETURN OF THE WOMAN CALLED JARELLA--PLUS THE MOST UNEXPECTED SUPER-VILLAIN THIS WEEK! BE HERE FOR...
HAVOC AT THE HEART OF THE ATOM!

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AUG
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02456
THE INCREDIBLE HULK®
BECAUSE YOU DEMANDED IT! THE RETURN OF JARELLA! THE WOMAN THE MAN-BRUTE LOVES!
HAVOC
AT THE HEART OF THE ATOM!!

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK! TM

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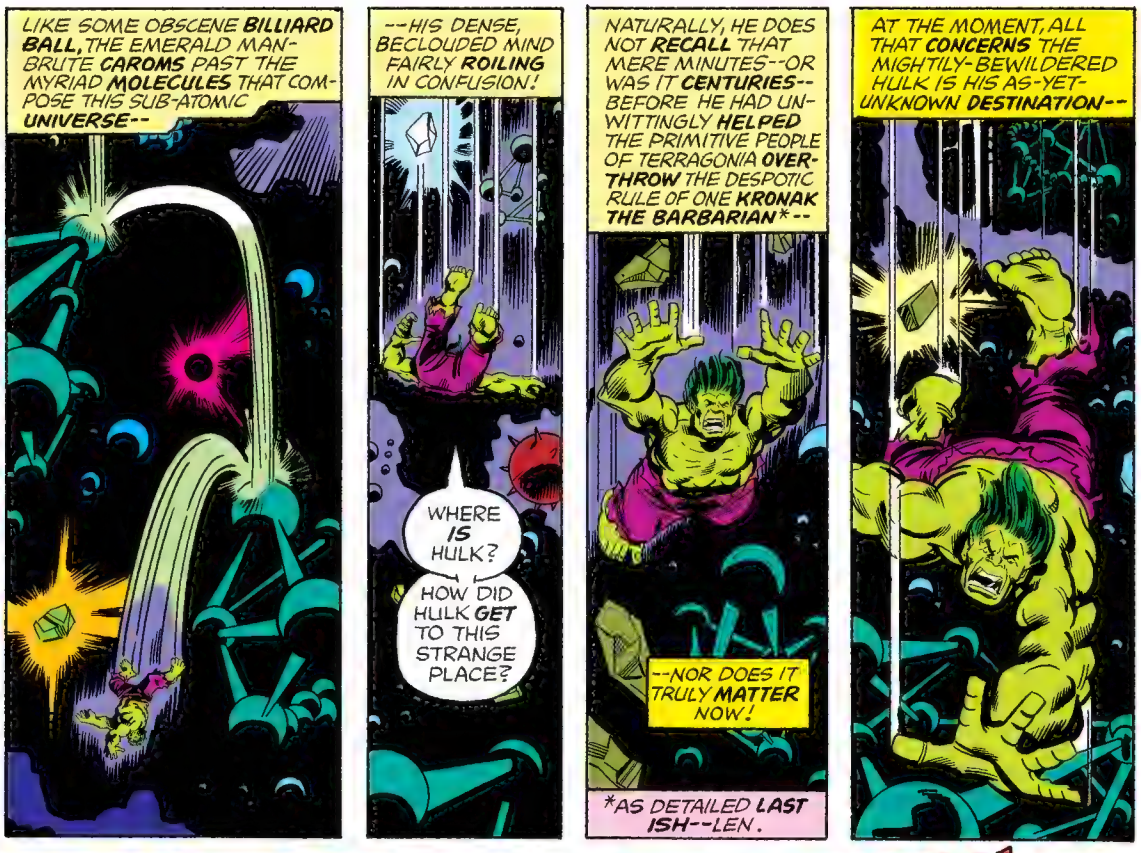
HAVOC AT THE HEART OF THE ATOM

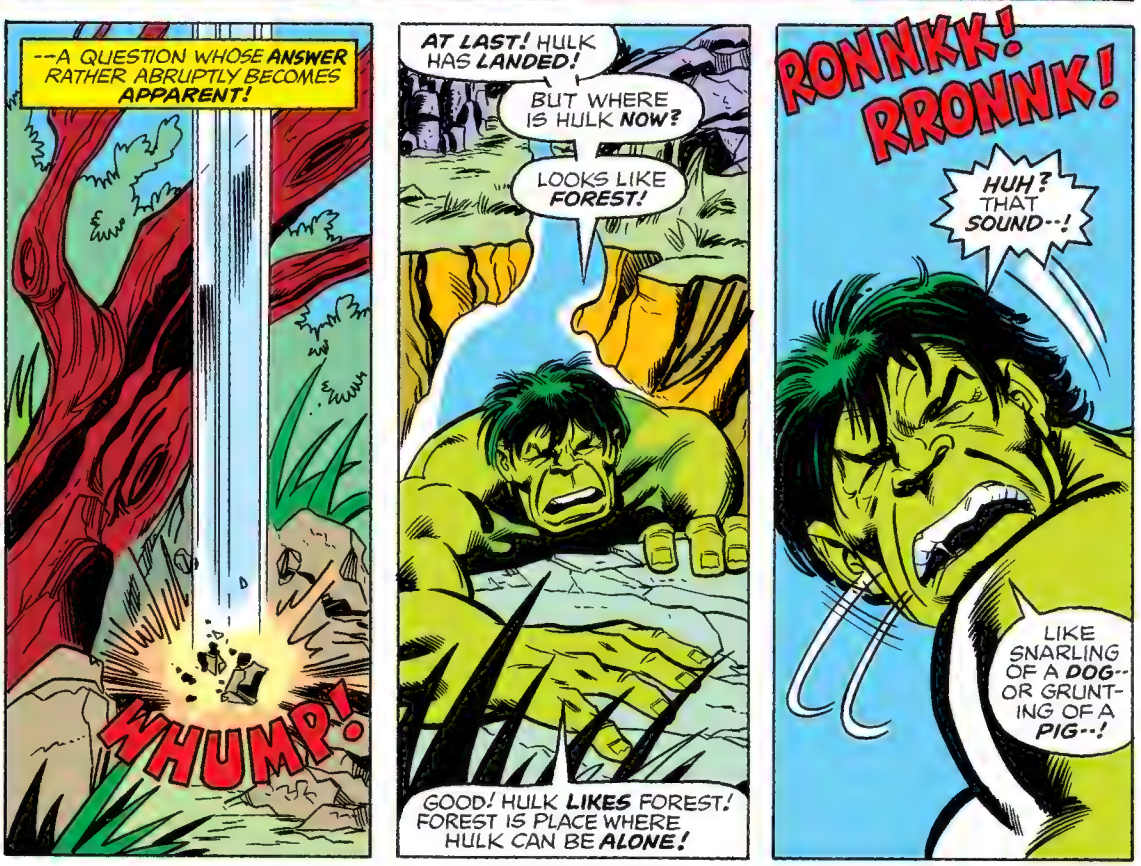
IT ISN'T REALLY **FALLING** THAT BOTHERS HIM SO MUCH; IT'S NEVER REACHING **BOTTOM!**

HE COULD **TAKE** THE SUDDEN, JARRING, BONE-WRENCHING **IMPACT** OF HIS EMERALD FLESH STRIKING THE EARTH--HE'S EXPERIENCED **THAT** MANY TIMES BEFORE--BUT THE INTERMINABLE **WAITING,** THE UNNERVING **UNCERTAINTY,** ARE ALMOST MORE THAN HE CAN **BEAR.**

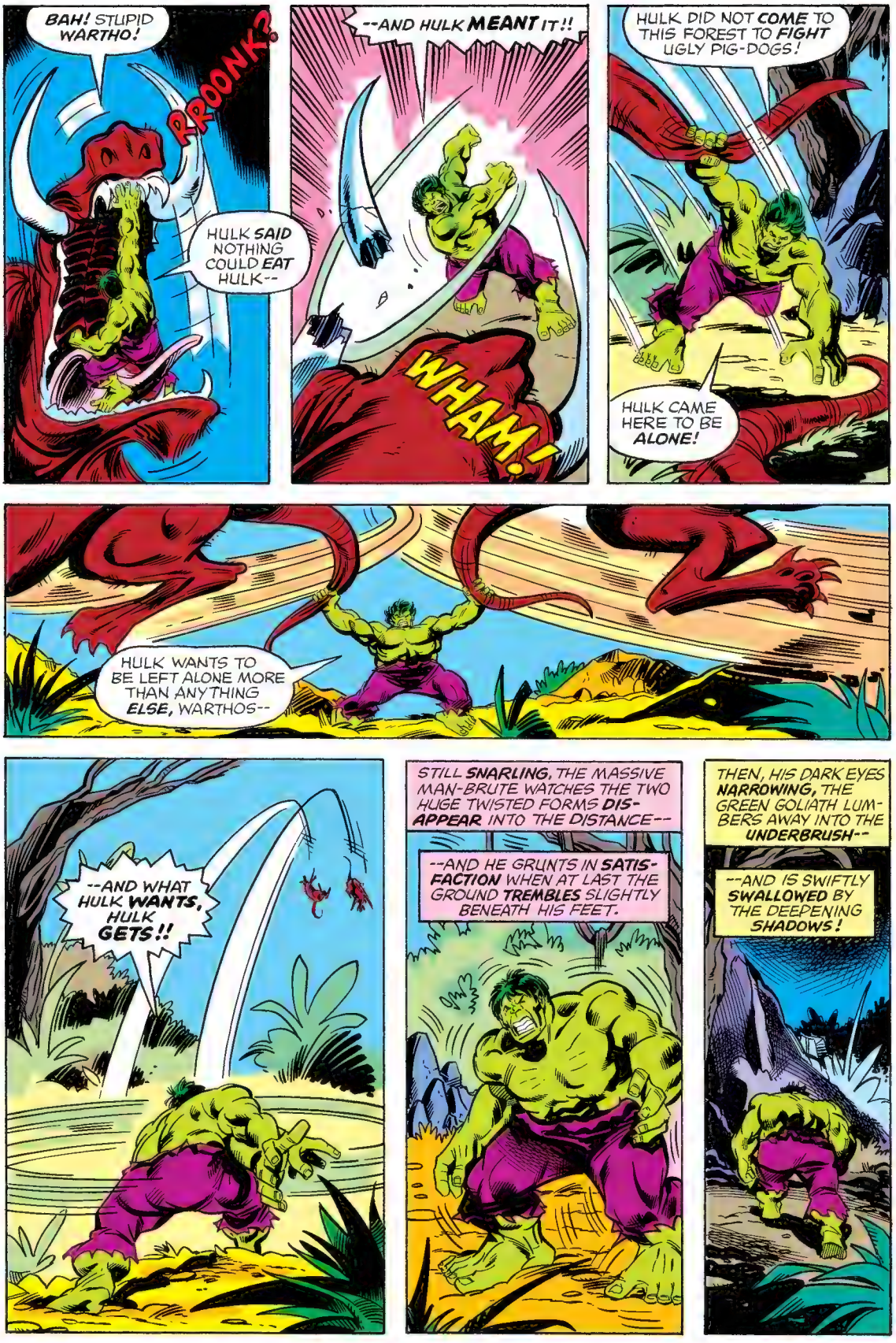
HE FEELS AS IF HE HAS BEEN FALLING **FOREVER**--

--AND HE MAY WELL BE **RIGHT!**


LIKE SOME OBSCENE BILLIARD BALL, THE EMERALD MAN-BRUTE CAROMS PAST THE MYRIAD MOLECULES THAT COMPOSE THIS SUB-ATOMIC UNIVERSE--
--HIS DENSE, BECLOUDED MIND FAIRLY ROILING IN CONFUSION!
WHERE IS HULK?
HOW DID HULK GET TO THIS STRANGE PLACE?
NATURALLY, HE DOES NOT RECALL THAT MERE MINUTES--OR WAS IT CENTURIES--BEFORE HE HAD UNWITTINGLY HELPED THE PRIMITIVE PEOPLE OF TERRAGONIA OVERTHROW THE DESPOTIC RULE OF ONE KRONAK THE BARBARIAN*--
--NOR DOES IT TRULY MATTER NOW!
*AS DETAILED LAST ISH--LEN.
AT THE MOMENT, ALL THAT CONCERNS THE MIGHTILY-BEWILDERED HULK IS HIS AS-YET-UNKNOWN DESTINATION--


--A QUESTION WHOSE ANSWER RATHER ABRUPTLY BECOMES APPARENT!
WHUMP!
AT LAST! HULK HAS LANDED!
BUT WHERE IS HULK NOW?
LOOKS LIKE FOREST!
GOOD! HULK LIKES FOREST! FOREST IS PLACE WHERE HULK CAN BE ALONE!
RONNKK! RRONNK!
HUH? THAT SOUND--!
LIKE SNARLING OF A DOG--OR GRUNTING OF A PIG--!

HAH! NOW HULK KNOWS WHERE HULK IS! HULK HAS BEEN HERE BEFORE! *
RONNKK!
RRONKK!
HULK IS IN FOREST OF PIG-DOGS!
GIANT ANIMALS CALLED WO... WAR...WARTHOS!
*BACK IN HULK #140 & 156. --LEN.
LAST TIME HULK WAS HERE, WARTHOS ATTACKED HULK-- TRIED TO EAT HULK--
--BUT THIS TIME, HULK WILL STRIKE FIRST!
THERE! HULK WAS FASTER THAN WARTHO!
NOW YOUR MOUTH CANNOT EAT HULK--YOUR HORNS CANNOT STAB HULK--
--BUT THERE IS MUCH HULK CAN DO TO YOU!!
PUNY WARTHO--HULK WAS TOO SMART FOR YOU! WARTHO CANNOT EAT HULK IF ITS HEAD IS STUCK IN GROUND!
NOTHING CAN EAT HULK SO LONG AS HULK IS...
UUMPPHH!!
GLOMP!


BAH! STUPID WARTHO!
RROONK?
HULK SAID NOTHING COULD EAT HULK--
--AND HULK MEANT IT!!
WHAM!
HULK DID NOT COME TO THIS FOREST TO FIGHT UGLY PIG-DOGS!
HULK CAME HERE TO BE ALONE!
HULK WANTS TO BE LEFT ALONE MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, WARTHOS--
--AND WHAT HULK WANTS, HULK GETS!!
STILL SNARLING, THE MASSIVE MAN-BRUTE WATCHES THE TWO HUGE TWISTED FORMS DISAPPEAR INTO THE DISTANCE--
--AND HE GRUNTS IN SATISFACTION WHEN AT LAST THE GROUND TREMBLES SLIGHTLY BENEATH HIS FEET.
THEN, HIS DARK EYES NARROWING, THE GREEN GOLIATH LUMBERS AWAY INTO THE UNDERBRUSH--
--AND IS SWIFTLY SWALLOWED BY THE DEEPENING SHADOWS!

GAMMA BASE, DEEP IN THE NEW MEXICAN DESERT: A SECLUDED INSTALLATION COUNTLESS WORLDS AWAY FROM THE CURRENTLY-INFINITESIMAL HULK--
--YET FAR CLOSER TO THE MAN-BRUTE THAN ONE COULD EVER IMAGINE!
CONFUSED, FAITHFUL ONE? WELL, YOU'RE NOT ALONE. JUST LISTEN TO THE QUIET CONVERSATION TRANSPIRING BETWEEN A RECENTLY-REVIVED MAJOR GLENN TALBOT AND HIS WORRIED WIFE BETTY--
--AND PERHAPS YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHAT WE MEAN!
THERE IS NOTHING MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN A SUNRISE WHEN YOU'VE THOUGHT THAT YOU WOULD NEVER LIVE TO SEE ANOTHER ONE, BETTY.
YOU'VE NO IDEA HOW DIFFERENT THINGS SEEM TO A MAN WHO'S BEEN IN A COMA AS LONG AS I HAVE--
--HOW PRECIOUS EVERYTHING SUDDENLY BECOMES.
IT'S LIKE BEING REBORN AGAIN.
THEN WHY RISK LOSING IT ALL OVER AGAIN, DARLING?
DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND, BETTY? I HAVE NO CHOICE!
LEN SAMSON HAS CURED YOU, GLENN. I BEG YOU--LEAVE WELL ENOUGH ALONE!
DOC SAMSON MAY HAVE RE-DUCED THE HULK TO PREVENT THE MONSTER FROM EXPLODING MY BRAIN FROM WITHIN*--
--BUT SUB-MICROSCOPIC SIZE OR NOT, THE HULK IS STILL IN-SIDE MY SKULL--AND HE HAS TO BE GOTTEN OUT!
BUT, DARLING, I...
*AS EXPLAINED IN GREAT DETAIL BACK IN ISH #200, RIGHT?--LEN.
TALBOT, THEY'RE READY FOR US DOWN IN MICRO-SURGERY, SO I THOUGHT I'D...
OH, SORRY. HOPE I'M NOT INTERRUPTING ANYTHING, FOLKS.
NO, LEN... NOTHING AT ALL.
BETTY, PLEASE--THIS IS SOMETHING I MUST DO--
--FOR BOTH OF US!
DEAR LORD, IF YOU HAVE ANY MERCY--LET HIM COME BACK TO ME!
I COULDN'T BEAR TO LOSE HIM A SECOND TIME!
DON'T WORRY, BETTY. WE'LL BE BACK SOON.

THE JUNGLE AIR IS FILLED WITH THE HAPPY CHIRPING OF BIRDS HIGH IN THE TREES, WITH THE GROWL OF CREATURES PROWLING THRU THE BUSH--
--AND WITH SOMETHING ELSE!
AT FIRST, THE HULK DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE SOUND, BUT STILL HIS CHILD-LIKE CURIOSITY DRAWS HIM CLOSER--
HUH?
--AND HIS MISSHAPEN FACE SCREWS TIGHT IN CUSTOMARY CONFUSION AT WHAT HE SEES!
THE UNFAMILIAR SOUND HAD BEEN CHANTING, IT SEEMS--A PRIMITIVE RITUAL OF SOME SORT!
AT THE FOOT OF THE CLOUD-TOPPED MOUNTAIN, A GAUDILY-GARBED WIZARD SHOUTS INCOMPREHENSIBLE SUPPLICATIONS AT THE SKY--
--WHILE A PALE, EMERALD-SKINNED WOMAN LIES BOUND UPON A CRUDE WOODEN CATAPULT--
--NO PROTEST UPON HER PARCHED LIPS, ONLY SOFT WORDS OF FORGIVENESS.
THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT THE CAPTIVE WOMAN THAT STRIKES A RESPONSIVE CHORD DEEP WITHIN THE JADE BEHEMOTH--
--A FRAGILE CHORD OF MEMORY!
HE STRAINS HIS FEEBLE MIND MIGHTILY TO REMEMBER HOW HE KNOWS THE HELPLESS WOMAN, WHY SHE SEEMS TO MEAN SO MUCH TO HIM--
--AND THEN, WITH SAVAGE SUDDENESS--HE KNOWS!
JARELLA!?!

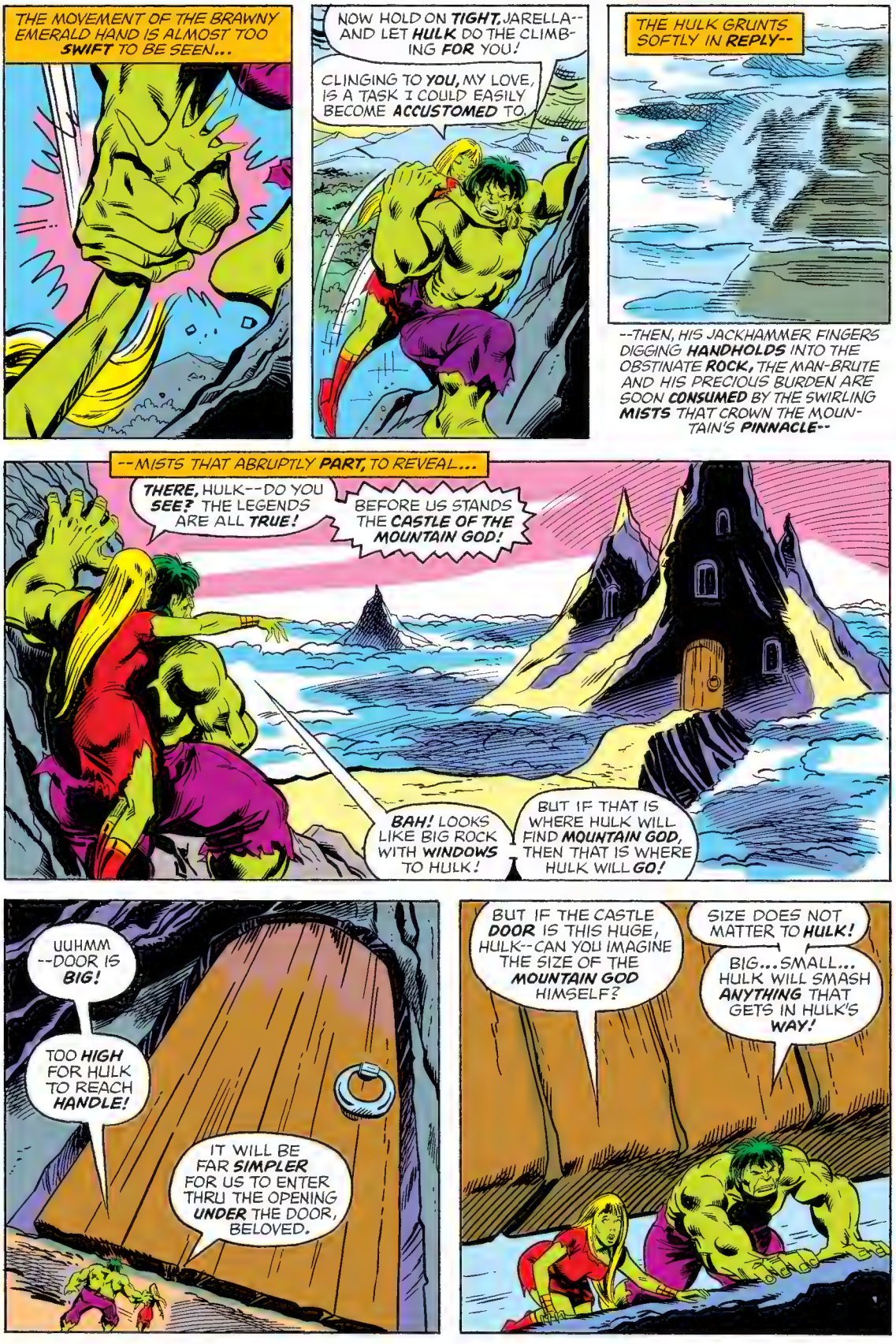
BUT EVEN AS THE GREEN GOLIATH SHOUTS HER NAME, THE HOODED HEADSMAN'S GLEAMING AXE SEVERS JARELLA'S FLIMSY LIFELINE--
CHOK!
--AND THE SEMI-CONSCIOUS WOMAN HURTLES SKYWARD, TOWARDS AN INEVITABLE RENDEZVOUS WITH DEATH!
WHUNNGG!
ER--AH--DID WE--AH--SAY INEVITABLE?
NO! HULK CAN-NOT HAVE FOUND JARELLA AGAIN--
--ONLY TO LOSE HER FOREVER!
HULK WILL SAVE JARELLA!
HULK MUST SAVE JARELLA--HULK MUST!!
CRUDE THOUGH IT WAS, THE WOODEN CATAPULT PRO-PELLED THE WOMAN AT DIZZYING SPEED TOWARD THE SHEER CLIFF WALL--
--BUT THE MOST POWER-FUL LEG MUSCLES EVER KNOWN PROPEL THE MAN-BRUTE FASTER!
HAH! HULK DID IT!
NO! IT ISN'T POSSIBLE! I MUST BE DREAMING--OR DEAD!
YOU CAN'T BE HERE--YOU CAN'T!!
AND THE EMERALD-SKINNED PEOPLE FAR BELOW SHARE JARELLA'S INCREDULITY--IF NOT HER RELIEF!
NO! THE BRUTISH ONE HAS STOLEN THE SACRIFICE!
THE GOD OF THE MOUNTAIN WILL SUFFER HIS WRATH UPON US UNLESS SHE IS SLAIN!
BAH! KEEP AWAY, LITTLE MEN!
IF ANY OF YOU TRIES TO HURT HULK'S JARELLA--
--HULK WILL SMASH!!
FOR YOUR OWN SAKES, PLEASE--STAY BACK!

YOU ARE NO LONGER OUR QUEEN, JARELLA--WE WILL NOT OBEY YOU!
FORGIVE US, JARELLA--BUT THE GOD OF THE MOUNTAIN WILL DESTROY US UNLESS WE DESTROY YOU!
HULK WARNED YOU, LITTLE MEN!
HULK DOES NOT WANT TO FIGHT YOU, BUT HULK TOLD YOU TO LEAVE JARELLA ALONE--
--AND HULK MEANS WHAT HULK SAYS!!
THOOM!
THE SHOCK-WAVE IS IM-PRESSIVE, AS ALWAYS.
THE WOULD-BE ATTACKERS ARE SNAPPED INTO THE AIR LIKE TWISTED RAG DOLLS--AND WHIPLASH ABOUNDS.
BUT UNLIKE ALWAYS, THE REVERBERATIONS OF THE MAN-BRUTE'S MIGHTY BLOW NEVER SEEM TO CEASE!
WH-WHAT IS HAPPEN-ING? HULK DID NOT SMASH GROUND THAT HARD!
IT IS NOT YOUR BLOW THAT CAUSES THIS, MY LOVE.
RATHER IT IS THE DREAD-FUL CURSE THAT HAS PLAGUED US SINCE LAST YOU LEFT OUR WORLD--
--A PLAGUE OF--
EARTHQUAKES!

COME, JARELLA--WE WILL GO AWAY FROM HERE BEFORE YOU ARE HURT!
BUT WHAT ABOUT MY POOR PEOPLE, MY LOVE? WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE THEM HERE TO DIE!
HUH?
PLEASE, BELOVED--YOU MUST DO SOMETHING TO HELP THEM!
LITTLE MEN TRY TO KILL JARELLA--AND STILL JARELLA WANTS TO SAVE THEM?
HULK DOES NOT UNDER-STAND--
--BUT IF JARELLA WANTS HULK TO CLOSE UGLY HOLE IN GROUND--
--THEN THAT IS WHAT HULK WILL DO!
BY THE SEVEN-SIDED CIRCLE! THE BEHEMOTH PULLED SHUT THE FISSURE THAT THREATENED TO DEVOUR US--!
AND HE D-DID IT WITH HIS BARE HANDS!
BAH! HULK'S HANDS WILL CRUSH YOU, LITTLE MEN--IF YOU TRY TO TOUCH JARELLA AGAIN!
NO, DARLING --PLEASE! THEY'RE MY PEOPLE!
THEY'RE... YOUR PEOPLE!
NO! MAYBE LITTLE MEN HAVE GREEN SKIN LIKE HULK-- BUT THEY ARE NOT HULK'S FRIENDS!
ONLY JARELLA IS HULK'S FRIEND--
--SO HULK WILL TAKE JARELLA WHERE SHE CAN BE SAFE!

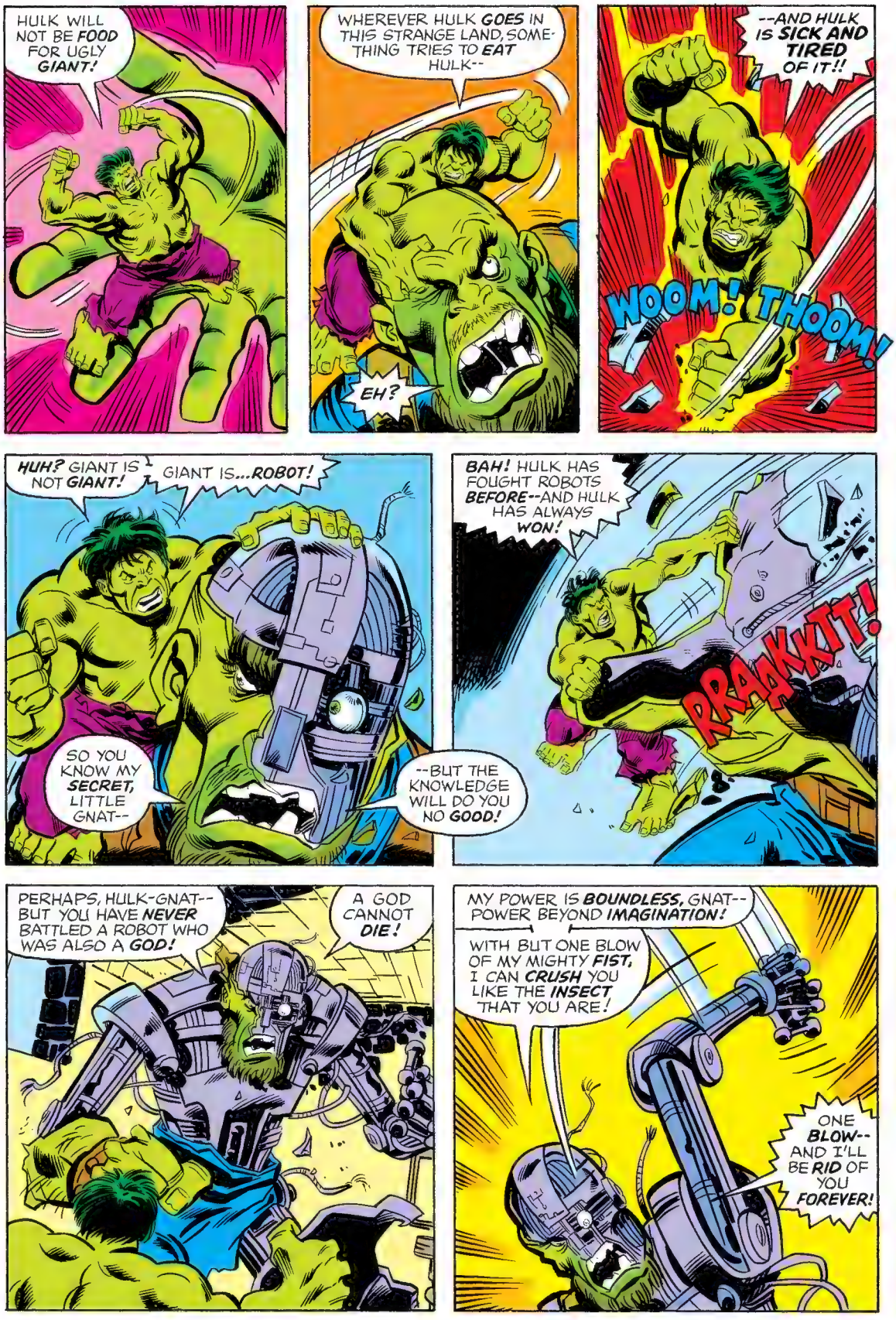
SHORTLY THEREAFTER, SOME DISTANCE AWAY...
IT IS TRULY A MIRACLE, MY LOVE--YOUR RETURNING TO US THUS, IN OUR TIME OF MOST DIRE NEED.
I THOUGHT I HAD LOST YOU FOREVER--BUT FOR ONCE THE GODS HAVE BEEN KIND.
THEY'VE BROUGHT YOU BACK FROM THE WORLD OF PINK-SKINNED MEN AND TAUGHT YOU OUR LANGUAGE ONCE MORE, AFTER I'D STOLEN THAT KNOWLEDGE FROM YOU TO SAVE YOUR VERY LIFE.
AND THAT, GENTLE HULK, IS PERHAPS THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL!
*AGAIN, BACK IN ISH #156.--LEN.
FOR NOW PERHAPS YOU CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT I WANT SO MUCH TO SAY--
--AND YOU CAN KNOW HOW MUCH I--
...LOVE...
...YOU...
MERE WORDS WOULD BE WHOLLY INADEQUATE TO DESCRIBE JARELLA'S REACTION TO THE MAN-BRUTE'S CHILD-LIKE GESTURE--
--BUT HER TEAR-TOUCHED EXPRESSION SPEAKS WITH OBVIOUS ELOQUENCE.
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH SAID: "THE CHILD IS FATHER OF THE MAN."
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE SAID: "LOVE DOTH MAKE CHILDREN OF US ALL."
NEED WE SAY MORE?

BUT, ALAS, LOVE'S LABOURS SELDOM LAST...
HUHNN??
GROUND IS SHAKING AGAIN--?!?
DO NOT WORRY, BELOVED. IT IS ONLY A MILD TREMOR. IT WILL QUICKLY PASS.
HULK IS NOT WORRIED, JARELLA. HULK ONLY WANTS TO KNOW WHERE SHAKING COMES FROM!
THERE ARE THOSE WHO SAY THAT I BROUGHT THIS FATE UPON US, MY LOVE--BY DARING TO LOVE AN OUT-WORLDER SUCH AS YOU!
THOSE SAME FRIGHTENED ZEALOTS WERE TRYING TO SACRIFICE ME TO HE WHO DWELLS ABOVE THE CLOUDS WHEN YOU APPEARED TO SAVE ME!
HE...WHO... DWELLS...?
A GREAT DEITY OF ANCIENT LEGEND, HULK --GENTLE IN HIS GENEROSITY AND AWESOME IN HIS WRATH!
HE IS CALLED --THE GOD OF THE MOUNTAIN!
BAH! IF PUNY GOD IS ALL THAT MAKES GROUND SHAKE, HULK WILL CLIMB TO TOP OF MOUNTAIN--
--AND MAKE GOD STOP!!
WAIT HERE, JARELLA. HULK WILL COME BACK TO YOU SOON!
NO, MY LOVE--I AM COMING WITH YOU! WHATEVER THE DANGER, I WILL FACE IT AT YOUR SIDE!
I OWE MY PEOPLE THAT MUCH AT LEAST.
OTHER MEN MIGHT OBJECT TO JARELLA'S DETERMINATION, BUT THE THOUGHT NEVER EVEN OCCURS TO THE THICK-HEADED HULK--AT LEAST NOT UNTIL...
JARELLA DID NOT HAVE TO COME WITH HULK.
HULK CAN SMASH MOUNTAIN GOD ALL ALONE!
I WAS ONCE QUEEN OF THIS LAND, MY LOVE. I CANNOT SHIRK MY DUTY.
UHHMM--BUT IF CLIMBING MAKES YOU TIRED, JARELLA--TELL HULK AND HULK WILL...
NO--! I LOST MY GRIP--!
I'M FALLING--!!


THE MOVEMENT OF THE BRAWNY EMERALD HAND IS ALMOST TOO SWIFT TO BE SEEN...
NOW HOLD ON TIGHT, JARELLA--AND LET HULK DO THE CLIMBING FOR YOU!
CLINGING TO YOU, MY LOVE, IS A TASK I COULD EASILY BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO.
THE HULK GRUNTS SOFTLY IN REPLY--
--THEN, HIS JACKHAMMER FINGERS DIGGING HANDHOLDS INTO THE OBSTINATE ROCK, THE MAN-BRUTE AND HIS PRECIOUS BURDEN ARE SOON CONSUMED BY THE SWIRLING MISTS THAT CROWN THE MOUNTAIN'S PINNACLE--
--MISTS THAT ABRUPTLY PART, TO REVEAL...
THERE, HULK--DO YOU SEE? THE LEGENDS ARE ALL TRUE!
BEFORE US STANDS THE CASTLE OF THE MOUNTAIN GOD!
BAH! LOOKS LIKE BIG ROCK WITH WINDOWS TO HULK!
BUT IF THAT IS WHERE HULK WILL FIND MOUNTAIN GOD, THEN THAT IS WHERE HULK WILL GO!
UUHMM --DOOR IS BIG!
TOO HIGH FOR HULK TO REACH HANDLE!
IT WILL BE FAR SIMPLER FOR US TO ENTER THRU THE OPENING UNDER THE DOOR, BELOVED.
BUT IF THE CASTLE DOOR IS THIS HUGE, HULK--CAN YOU IMAGINE THE SIZE OF THE MOUNTAIN GOD HIMSELF?
SIZE DOES NOT MATTER TO HULK!
BIG...SMALL... HULK WILL SMASH ANYTHING THAT GETS IN HULK'S WAY!

BY THE SEVEN-SIDED CIRCLE! NEVER BEFORE HAVE I FELT SO TRULY INSIGNIFICANT AS I DO AT THIS MOMENT!
WHY?
EVERYTHING IS SO IMMENSE--SO HUGE! PERHAPS WE WERE WRONG TO COME HERE, HULK.
PLEASE, MY LOVE--LET US LEAVE WHILE THERE IS STILL--
STOMP! STOMP! STOMP!
GODS OF K'AI!
IT--IT CANNOT BE--!
BLOOD IN RIVERS RUNNING DEEP--WHO DARES INVADE MY CASTLE KEEP?
HUH?
IT IS--GIANT!
SO! LITTLE GNATS COME TO BOTHER ME, AY?
THEN TONIGHT THE GOD OF THE MOUNTAIN WILL FEAST!

THOUGH I DOUBT EITHER OF YOU WILL PROVIDE ME WITH MORE THAN A MOUTHFUL!
CHOOM!
STAY BACK, JARELLA --WHERE IT IS SAFE! LEAVE THE FIGHTING TO HULK!
FIGHTING IS WHAT HULK DOES BEST!
DARLING-- DON'T--!
NO! MOUNTAIN GOD SHOOK THE GROUND TO HURT JARELLA'S PEOPLE!
MOUNTAIN GOD TRIED TO CHOP HULK AND JARELLA UP WITH AXE--
--AND, MOUNTAIN GOD--THAT MAKES HULK MAD!
POW!
INCONSEQUENTIAL GNAT! DO YOU TRULY THINK YOU ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO CONQUER THE GOD OF THE MOUNTAIN?
WHAK!
HULK IS STRONGER THAN ANYONE, GIANT--
UUNNGGHH!!
--AND WHEN HULK GETS UP, HULK WILL PROVE IT!
THWAMM!
YOU WILL DO NOTHING, HULK-GNAT-- EXCEPT DIE!
I'LL GRIND YOUR BONES TO MAKE MY BREAD!
NO!


HULK WILL NOT BE FOOD FOR UGLY GIANT!
WHEREVER HULK GOES IN THIS STRANGE LAND, SOMETHING TRIES TO EAT HULK--
EH?
--AND HULK IS SICK AND TIRED OF IT!!
WOOM!
THOOM!
HUH? GIANT IS NOT GIANT!
GIANT IS...ROBOT!
SO YOU KNOW MY SECRET, LITTLE GNAT--
--BUT THE KNOWLEDGE WILL DO YOU NO GOOD!
BAH! HULK HAS FOUGHT ROBOTS BEFORE--AND HULK HAS ALWAYS WON!
RRAAKKTT!
PERHAPS, HULK-GNAT--BUT YOU HAVE NEVER BATTLED A ROBOT WHO WAS ALSO A GOD!
A GOD CANNOT DIE!
MY POWER IS BOUNDLESS, GNAT--POWER BEYOND IMAGINATION!
WITH BUT ONE BLOW OF MY MIGHTY FIST, I CAN CRUSH YOU LIKE THE INSECT THAT YOU ARE!
ONE BLOW--AND I'LL BE RID OF YOU FOREVER!

BAH!
NO! NOOOO!!
ROBOT TALKS TOO MUCH--LIKE PUNY HUMAN!
AND HULK HAS HEARD ENOUGH!
THE MECHANOID'S ARM IS SEVERED FROM ITS SHOULDER WITH AN UNNERVING SQUEAL OF TWISTING METAL, A SOUND SUDDENLY SMOTHERED BY THE CRASH OF ERUPTING GRANITE--
GODS CANNOT DIE EEEEEEE
--AND THE ROBOT'S DEATH-CRY COMES TO A SHATTERING END, HALFWAY DOWN THE MOUNTAINSIDE!
WHILE, BACK INSIDE THE CRAGGY CASTLE...
ROBOT THOUGHT IT WAS STRONGER THAN HULK--BUT ROBOT WAS WRONG!
HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!
KKRRUUNNCCHH!!
A-ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MY LOVE? I WAS SO WORRIED!
DUST, JARELLA.
IS THERE ANYTHING LEFT OF THE MONSTER, HULK?
ONLY DUST IS LEFT.
MOUNTAIN GOD IS GONE, JARELLA. THE GROUND WILL SHAKE NO MORE.
NOW COME! HULK WILL TAKE YOU AWAY FROM HERE.
DARLING--WAIT! WE STILL DO NOT KNOW WHO BUILT THAT METALLIC MONSTROSITY.
AND HULK DOES NOT CARE! HULK SMASHED STUPID ROBOT, AND THAT IS ENOUGH FOR...

HHAARRGGHH!!
GODS OF K'AI!!
ZZAAKK!!
H-HE LIES SO SOLEMN--SO STILL! BY THE ALL THE GODS, I CANNOT HAVE FOUND MY ONE TRUE LOVE AGAIN, ONLY TO HAVE LED HIM TO HIS DEATH!
HULK? HULK?? I BEG YOU, MY LOVE--PLEASE SPEAK TO ME!
YOU ARE WASTING YOUR BREATH, WOMAN, THE MAN-BRUTE CANNOT HEAR YOU--WHICH IS, IN IT'S FASHION, A PITY!
YOU WANTED TO KNOW WHO CONSTRUCTED THE GOD OF THE MOUNTAIN, AND NOW YOU HAVE YOUR ANSWER--BUT IT WILL AVAIL YOU NOTHING!
FOR NOTHING THAT LIVES CAN HOPE TO STAND BEFORE THE POWER OF--
PSYKLOP!

NEXT ISSUE: MORE MIND-BENDING MAYHEM THAN YOU CAN SHAKE A GAMMA-IRRADIATED STICK AT--PLUS (WE HOPE) A SURPRISE OR TWO! BE HERE FOR...

THE TOWER THAT TORE THE SKY!

INCREDIBLE HULK
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
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203
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THE INCREDIBLE HULK®
IF ONE PSYKLOP IS MORE THAN A MATCH FOR YOU, MAN-BRUTE--
ROMITA
--WHAT CHANCE DO YOU STAND AGAINST AN ARMY OF US?!!
ASSAULT ON PSYKLOP!

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!™

LEN WEIN WRITER/EDITOR / SAL BUSCEMA & JOE STATON ARTISTS/ILLUSTRATORS / GLYNIS WEIN COLORIST / IRV WATANABE LETTERER

ASSAULT ON PSYKLOP!

LOVE'S LABOURS LOST DEPT: *IT SEEMS NOTHING EVER GOES* ***RIGHT*** *FOR OUR JOLLY GREEN GOLIATH. NO SOONER DOES THE HULK RETURN TO THE MICRO—WORLD OF* ***K'AI*** *AND THE ARMS OF HIS BELOVED* ***JARELLA,*** *THAN HE FINDS HIMSELF A* ***CAPTIVE*** *OF THE MILLENIA-OLD MADMAN CALLED* ***PSYKLOP!*** *AND IF THAT ISN'T ALREADY TROUBLE* ***A'PLENTY,*** *THERE'S STILL...*

I BEG YOU, PSYKLOP-- ***RELEASE*** US! WE'VE DONE ***NOTHING*** TO YOU!

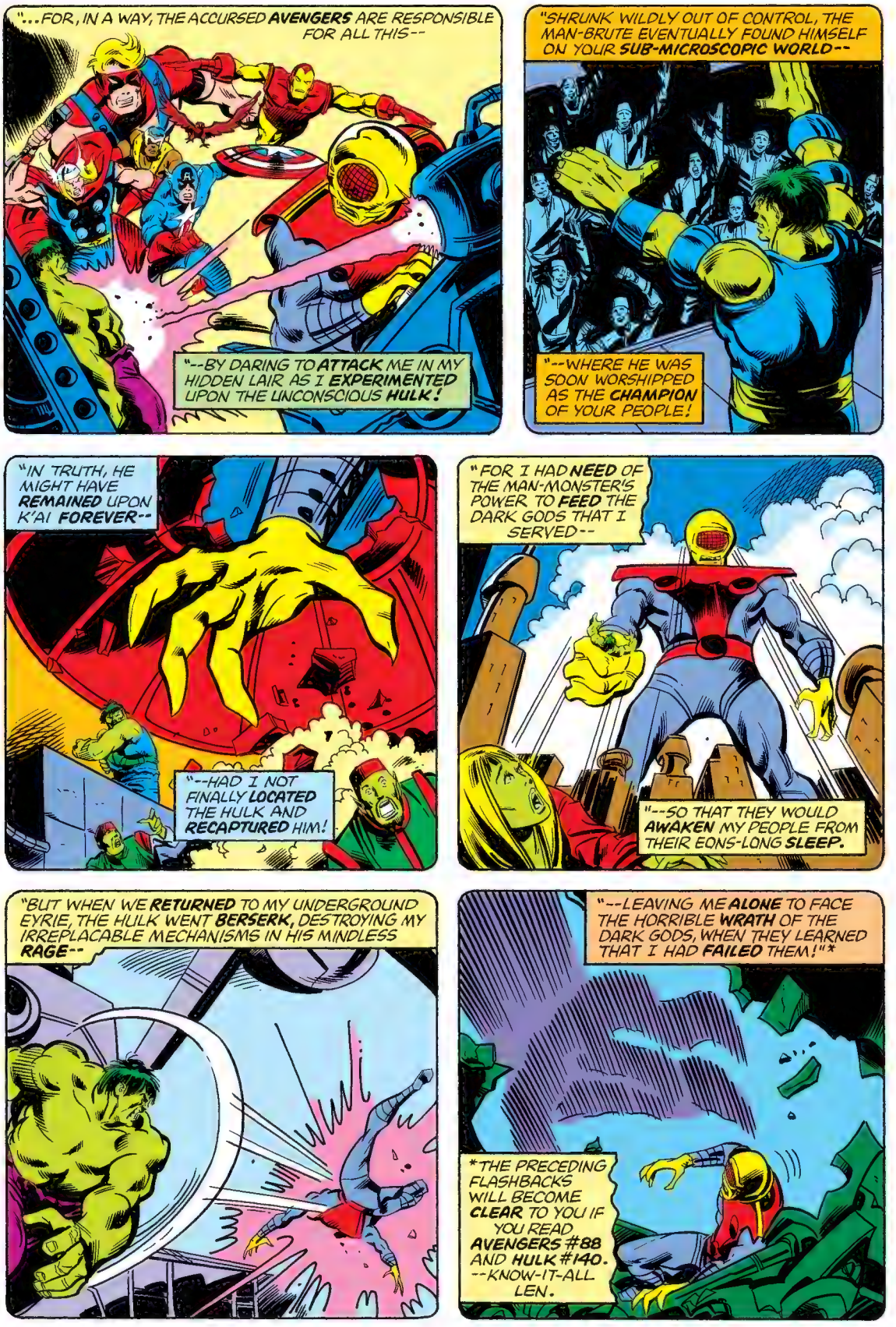
NAH, *THAT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH TO GET YOU* ***STARTED,*** *FAITHFUL ONE! WE'LL TRY TO TIE UP ANY* ***LOOSE ENDS*** *AS WE GO* ***THOOMING ALONG!***

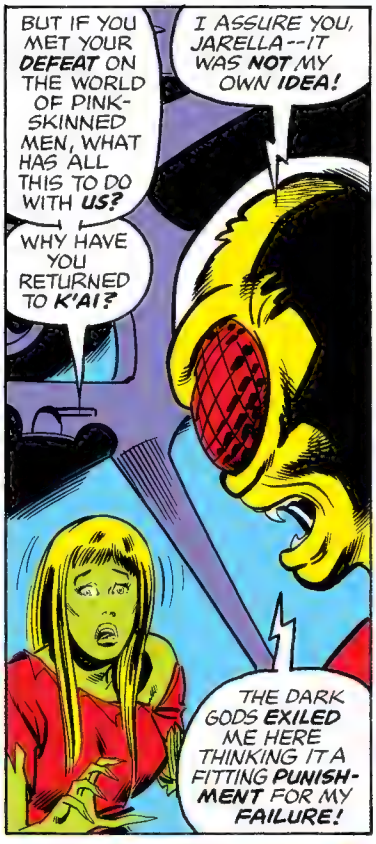
WOMAN, YOU AND YOUR FEEBLE-MINDED PARAMOUR HAVE DONE ME MORE ***HARM*** THAN YOU COULD EVER ***IMAGINE***--

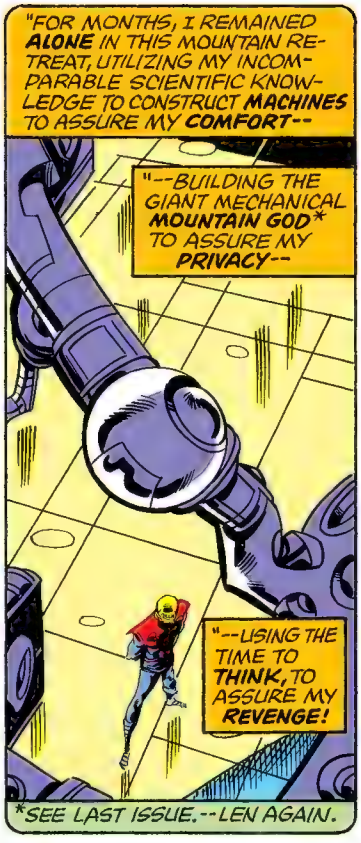
--AND NOW YOU ARE GOING TO ***PAY*** FOR IT!!

OF COURSE, I MIGHT BE PERSUADED TO MAKE YOUR DEATH A MORE PLEASANT ONE, JARELLA--AS BEFITS A FORMER QUEEN!
PLEASE--DON'T TOUCH ME!
LEAVE JARELLA ALONE, ONE-EYE--OR HULK WILL SMASH!
YOU'LL DO NOTHING, MAN-BRUTE! YOUR BONDS ARE FORGED OF DIMUNDIUM STEEL--UTTERLY UNBREAKABLE!
YOU ARE MY PRISONER, HULK--AND SOON YOU SHALL BE MY VICTIM!
NO! HULK WILL BE NO ONE'S VICTIM!
HULK WILL BE NO ONE'S PRISONER!
HULK WILL BE WHAT HULK WANTS TO BE--
--AND HULK WANTS TO BE FREE!!
KAR-
ROOMM!
NOW GIVE JARELLA BACK TO HULK, ONE-EYE--
--OR HULK WILL CRUSH YOU LIKE A BUG!
YOU THINK TO INSULT ME, MONSTER--BUT YOU'VE NO IDEA HOW TRULY YOU SPEAK!
MY RACE DID INDEED EVOLVE FROM THE LOWLY INSECT--TO BECOME THE RULERS OF ANCIENT EARTH!
KLIK!
OUR SCIENTIFIC PROWESS WAS UNPARALLELED--

--AND WE HAD WEAPONS UNDREAMED OF AT OUR FINGERTIPS!
ZZAKK!
BAH! PUNY RAYS CANNOT HURT HULK!
INCREDIBLE! THOSE SPASM-RAYS SHOULD HAVE DISRUPTED YOUR ENTIRE NERVOUS SYSTEM!
AND NOT EVEN A SONIC DIS-PLACER HAS ANY EFFECT ON YOUR GAMMA-IRRADIATED FORM!
NOTHING WILL STOP HULK, ONE-EYE--UNTIL HULK HAS STOPPED YOU!
I'M WARNING YOU, BRUTE--STAY BACK! THE CONSE-QUENCES ARE DIRE FOR ANYONE WHO DARES AT-TACK IMMORTAL PSYKLOP!
HAH! ONE-EYE WANTED TO KILL HULK!
WHAT IS WORSE THAN DEATH?
LIFE, MONSTER--LIFE WITHOUT CONSCIOUS THOUGHT OR VOLUNTARY DEED!
LIFE AS AN UN-WILLING SLAVE OF MY HYPNOTIC POWER!
THE BEHEMOTH STOPS SHORT, AS IF STRUCK A MOR-TAL BLOW. FOR AN INSTANT, HIS MASSIVE FORM TOTTERS FROM SIDE-TO-SIDE--
--THEN HIS DULLISH EYES ROLL BACK INTO HIS HEAD--
--AND HE TOPPLES LIKE A FELLED SEQUOIA TREE!
DO YOU SEE, HULK--YOUR SAVAGE POWER PALES BEFORE MINE!
NO! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO HIM! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO MY BELOVED?
WHUMP!
I'VE NEUTRAL-IZED THE MAN-BRUTE'S THREAT TO ME, WOMAN--
--AS I SHOULD HAVE DONE WHEN FIRST HE AND I MET, THOSE MANY LONG MONTHS AGO!
IS THAT IT? IS IT REVENGE YOU SEEK? IS THAT WHY YOU'VE DEVASTATED MY WORLD?
THERE IS A GREAT DEAL MORE TO THINGS THAN THAT, JARELLA...
... BUT PERHAPS I'D BEST START FROM THE BEGINNING...


"...FOR, IN A WAY, THE ACCURSED AVENGERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THIS--
"--BY DARING TO ATTACK ME IN MY HIDDEN LAIR AS I EXPERIMENTED UPON THE UNCONSCIOUS HULK!
"SHRUNK WILDLY OUT OF CONTROL, THE MAN-BRUTE EVENTUALLY FOUND HIMSELF ON YOUR SUB-MICROSCOPIC WORLD--
"--WHERE HE WAS SOON WORSHIPPED AS THE CHAMPION OF YOUR PEOPLE!
"IN TRUTH, HE MIGHT HAVE REMAINED UPON K'AI FOREVER--
"--HAD I NOT FINALLY LOCATED THE HULK AND RECAPTURED HIM!
"FOR I HAD NEED OF THE MAN-MONSTER'S POWER TO FEED THE DARK GODS THAT I SERVED--
"--SO THAT THEY WOULD AWAKEN MY PEOPLE FROM THEIR EONS-LONG SLEEP.
"BUT WHEN WE RETURNED TO MY UNDERGROUND EYRIE, THE HULK WENT BERSERK, DESTROYING MY IRREPLACABLE MECHANISMS IN HIS MINDLESS RAGE--
"--LEAVING ME ALONE TO FACE THE HORRIBLE WRATH OF THE DARK GODS, WHEN THEY LEARNED THAT I HAD FAILED THEM!"*
*THE PRECEDING FLASHBACKS WILL BECOME CLEAR TO YOU IF YOU READ AVENGERS #88 AND HULK #140. --KNOW-IT-ALL LEN.


BUT IF YOU MET YOUR DEFEAT ON THE WORLD OF PINK-SKINNED MEN, WHAT HAS ALL THIS TO DO WITH US?
I ASSURE YOU, JARELLA--IT WAS NOT MY OWN IDEA!
WHY HAVE YOU RETURNED TO K'AI?
THE DARK GODS EXILED ME HERE THINKING IT A FITTING PUNISHMENT FOR MY FAILURE!

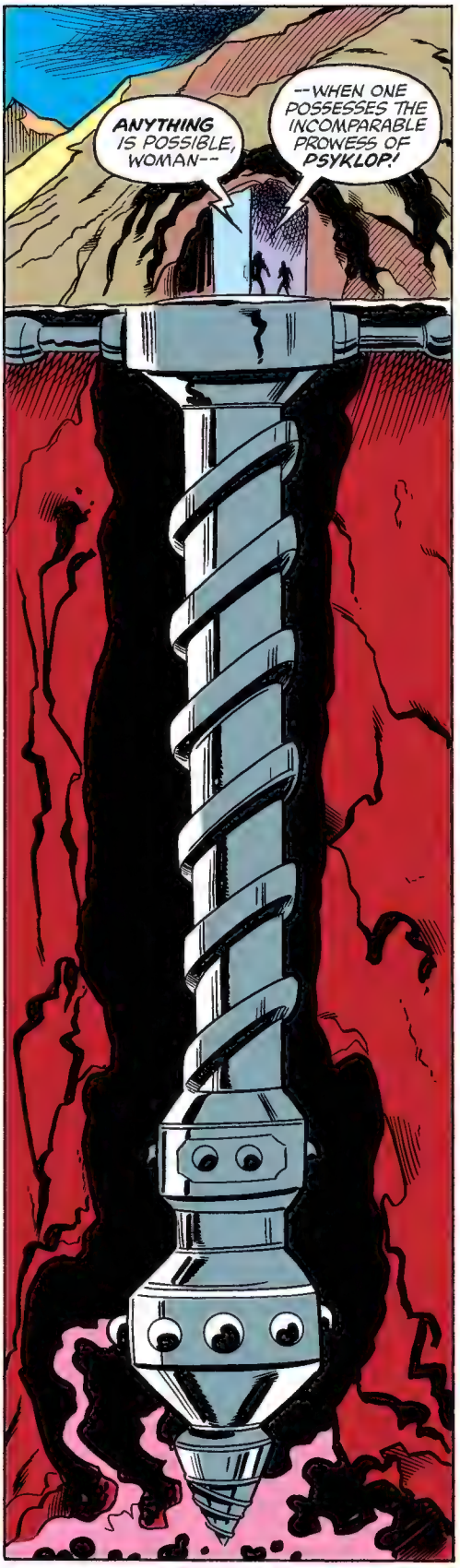

"FOR MONTHS, I REMAINED ALONE IN THIS MOUNTAIN RETREAT, UTILIZING MY INCOMPARABLE SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE TO CONSTRUCT MACHINES TO ASSURE MY COMFORT--
"--BUILDING THE GIANT MECHANICAL MOUNTAIN GOD* TO ASSURE MY PRIVACY--
"--USING THE TIME TO THINK, TO ASSURE MY REVENGE!
*SEE LAST ISSUE.--LEN AGAIN.

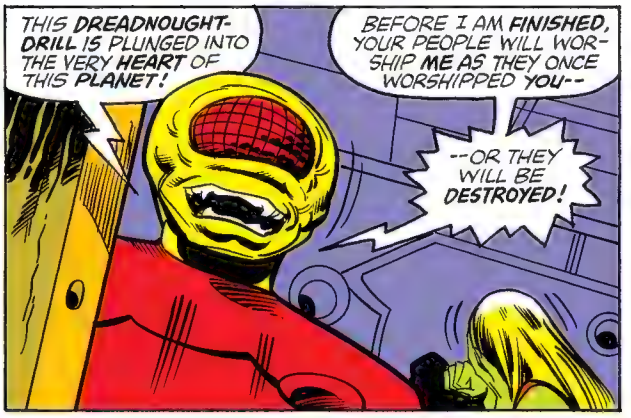
"ON MY PLANET-SPANNING VIEW-SCANNERS, I WATCHED AS THE HULK RETURNED TO K'AI--TO FREE ITS PEOPLE FROM THE EVIL LORD VISIS*--
*ISSUE #156.--LIVELY YOU-KNOW-WHO.

"--AND I WATCHED AS HE GREW TOO HUGE FOR YOUR WORLD TO CONTAIN HIM--
"--AND, WITH A SINGLE THRUST OF HIS GIGANTIC FOOT, ACCIDENTALLY KICKED THE WORLD OF K'AI FROM ITS ORBIT!"

IT IS THAT WHICH IS ACTUALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EARTHQUAKES WHICH HAVE PLAGUED THIS PLANET SINCE THAT DAY--
--THOUGH YOUR SIMPLE-MINDED SUBJECTS CHOSE TO BELIEVE IT WAS THE ANGER OF THEIR LEGENDARY MOUNTAIN GOD!

FOR MY OWN PURPOSES, I ALLOWED THEM TO CONTINUE IN THAT BELIEF, AND WHEN THE QUAKES BEGAN TO ABATE...
WELL, I TOOK STEPS TO INSURE THAT WILL NEVER HAPPEN!
BY THE SEVEN-SIDED CIRCLE! IT --IT ISN'T POSSIBLE--!


ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE, WOMAN--
--WHEN ONE POSSESSES THE INCOMPARABLE PROWESS OF PSYKLOP!

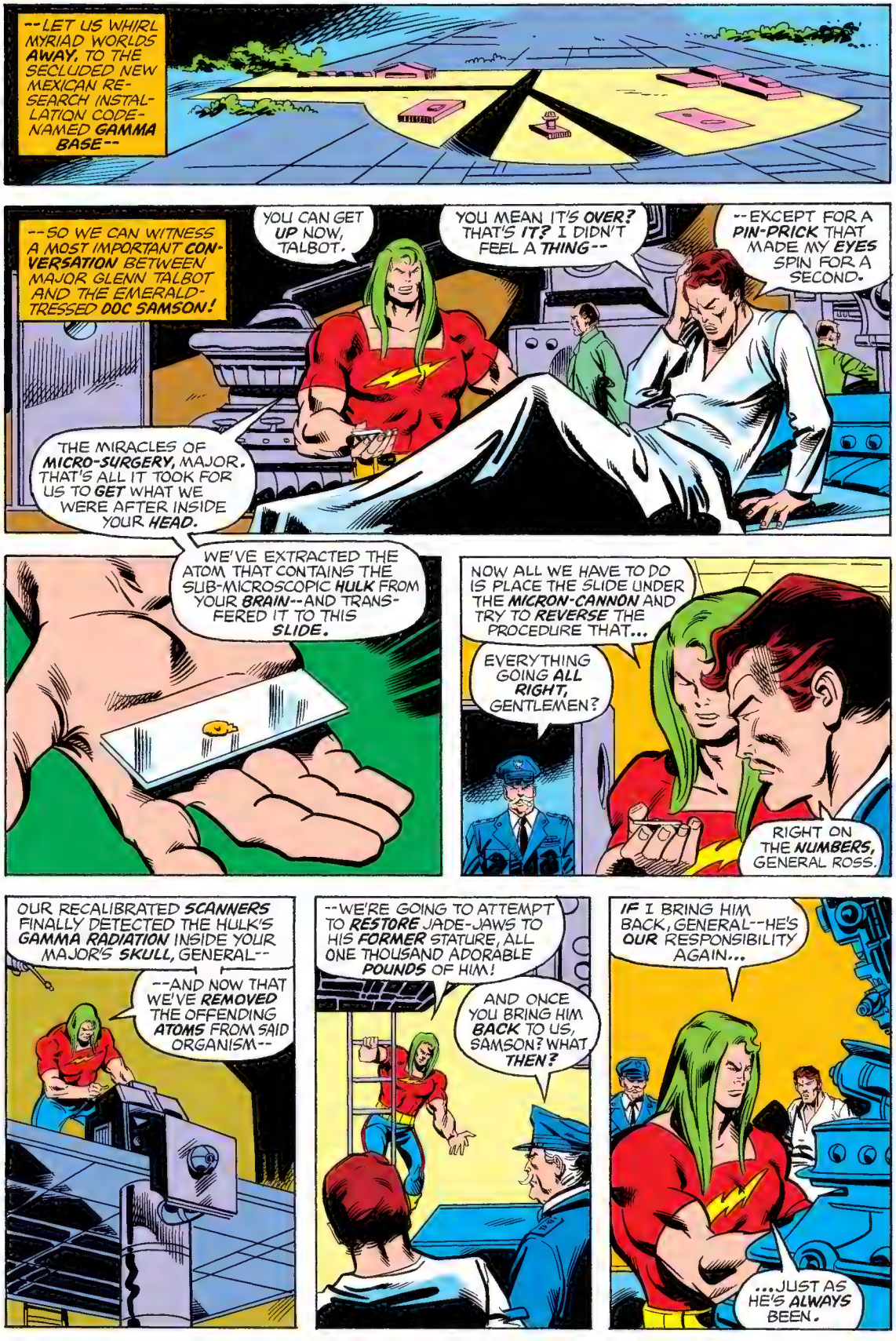

THIS DREADNOUGHT-DRILL IS PLUNGED INTO THE VERY HEART OF THIS PLANET!
BEFORE I AM FINISHED, YOUR PEOPLE WILL WORSHIP ME AS THEY ONCE WORSHIPPED YOU--
--OR THEY WILL BE DESTROYED!

DO YOU SEE? IS IT NOT AS I TOLD YOU? THE ANCIENT GODS WERE NOT ANGRY WITH OUR QUEEN!
WE HAVE ALL BEEN VICTIMS OF AN ALIEN FIEND!

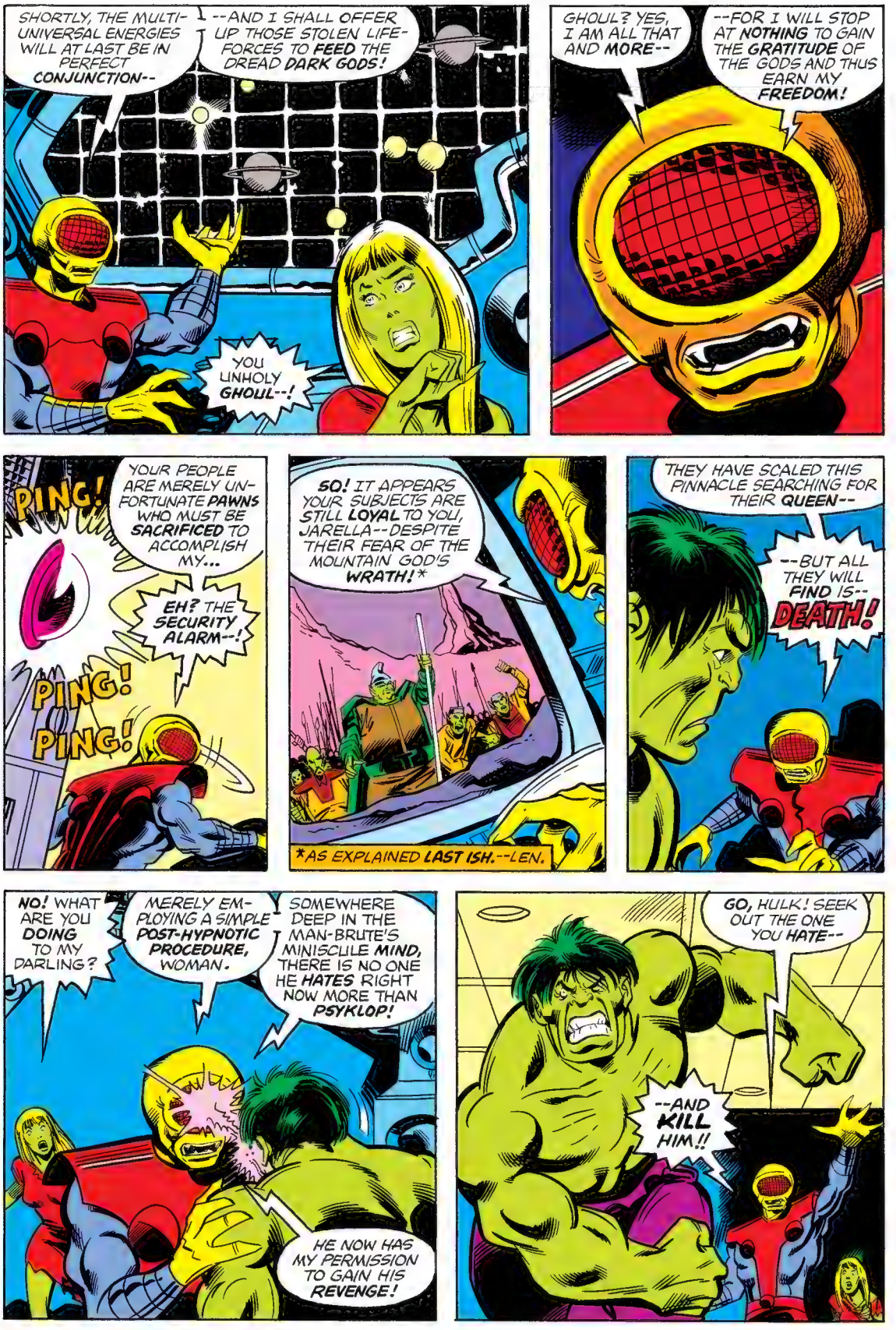
WHAT SAY YOU, MEN OF K'AI? DO WE ALLOW THE INVADER TO TREAT US LIKE INSIGNIFICANT CATTLE--
--OR DO WE STRIKE BACK FOR OUR BELOVED JARELLA?

WE STRIKE!
FOR JARELLA!!

FOR JARELLA! FOR JARELLA!
AND AS THE RUINS OF THE ANCIENT CITY SHE ONCE RULED ECHO WITH THE CAPTIVE QUEEN'S NAME--


--LET US WHIRL MYRIAD WORLDS AWAY, TO THE SECLUDED NEW MEXICAN RESEARCH INSTALLATION CODE-NAMED GAMMA BASE--
--SO WE CAN WITNESS A MOST IMPORTANT CONVERSATION BETWEEN MAJOR GLENN TALBOT AND THE EMERALD-TRESSED DOC SAMSON!
YOU CAN GET UP NOW, TALBOT.
YOU MEAN IT'S OVER? THAT'S IT? I DIDN'T FEEL A THING--
--EXCEPT FOR A PIN-PRICK THAT MADE MY EYES SPIN FOR A SECOND.
THE MIRACLES OF MICRO-SURGERY, MAJOR. THAT'S ALL IT TOOK FOR US TO GET WHAT WE WERE AFTER INSIDE YOUR HEAD.
WE'VE EXTRACTED THE ATOM THAT CONTAINS THE SUB-MICROSCOPIC HULK FROM YOUR BRAIN--AND TRANSFERED IT TO THIS SLIDE.
NOW ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS PLACE THE SLIDE UNDER THE MICRON-CANNON AND TRY TO REVERSE THE PROCEDURE THAT...
EVERYTHING GOING ALL RIGHT, GENTLEMEN?
RIGHT ON THE NUMBERS, GENERAL ROSS.
OUR RECALIBRATED SCANNERS FINALLY DETECTED THE HULK'S GAMMA RADIATION INSIDE YOUR MAJOR'S SKULL, GENERAL--
--AND NOW THAT WE'VE REMOVED THE OFFENDING ATOMS FROM SAID ORGANISM--
--WE'RE GOING TO ATTEMPT TO RESTORE JADE-JAWS TO HIS FORMER STATURE, ALL ONE THOUSAND ADORABLE POUNDS OF HIM!
AND ONCE YOU BRING HIM BACK TO US, SAMSON? WHAT THEN?
IF I BRING HIM BACK, GENERAL--HE'S OUR RESPONSIBILITY AGAIN...
...JUST AS HE'S ALWAYS BEEN.

WHILE, ON K'AI...
HE MAKES A MOST EFFICIENT SERVANT, DOES HE NOT?
THE HULK'S SHEER BRUTE STRENGTH CAN ACCOMPLISH IN MINUTES WHAT MY AUTOMATED MECHANISMS REQUIRED HOURS TO PERFORM.
A PITY I DID NOT HAVE HIS SERVICES WHEN I BEGAN MY MASTER PLAN!
THEN WHAT I'VE FEARED IS TRUE! THERE IS MORE TO ALL OF THIS THAN A SIMPLE THIRST FOR VENGEANCE, ISN'T THERE?
BUT WHAT? WHAT??
THE ANSWER TO THAT IS RATHER DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN TO ONE OF YOUR LIMITED INTELLIGENCE. PERHAPS IT WOULD BE BEST IF I SHOWED YOU.
IF YOU WOULD ACCOMPANY ME, MY GOOD EX-QUEEN--?
HAVE I ANY CHOICE?
THERE! DO YOU SEE IT, WOMAN?
I PRESENT THE ULTIMATE PRODUCT OF MY MATCHLESS GENIUS!
TH-THAT LIGHT-- IT'S BLINDING--SO BRIGHT I CAN HARDLY SEE--!
LOOK DEEP, JARELLA-- BEYOND THE LIGHT!
OPEN YOUR EYES TO WONDER --AND BEHOLD THE ESSENCE URN!
NO! I CAN'T LOOK! TH-THAT JAR PULSES-- AS IF IT WAS ALIVE--!
AND, IN A WAY, IT IS ALIVE-- FOR CONTAINED IN THIS VESSEL IS THE COLLECTIVE LIFE-FORCE OF THOSE WHO WERE SLAIN BY MY EARTHQUAKES!
A PRIZE THAT WILL BUY MY FREEDOM FROM THIS CURSED WORLD!


SHORTLY, THE MULTI-UNIVERSAL ENERGIES WILL AT LAST BE IN PERFECT CONJUNCTION--
--AND I SHALL OFFER UP THOSE STOLEN LIFE-FORCES TO FEED THE DREAD DARK GODS!
YOU UNHOLY GHOUL--!
GHOUL? YES, I AM ALL THAT AND MORE--
--FOR I WILL STOP AT NOTHING TO GAIN THE GRATITUDE OF THE GODS AND THUS EARN MY FREEDOM!
PING!
YOUR PEOPLE ARE MERELY UNFORTUNATE PAWNS WHO MUST BE SACRIFICED TO ACCOMPLISH MY...
EH? THE SECURITY ALARM--!
PING!
PING!
SO! IT APPEARS YOUR SUBJECTS ARE STILL LOYAL TO YOU, JARELLA--DESPITE THEIR FEAR OF THE MOUNTAIN GOD'S WRATH!*
*AS EXPLAINED LAST ISH.--LEN.
THEY HAVE SCALED THIS PINNACLE SEARCHING FOR THEIR QUEEN--
--BUT ALL THEY WILL FIND IS--
DEATH!
NO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO MY DARLING?
MERELY EMPLOYING A SIMPLE POST-HYPNOTIC PROCEDURE, WOMAN.
SOMEWHERE DEEP IN THE MAN-BRUTE'S MINISCULE MIND, THERE IS NO ONE HE HATES RIGHT NOW MORE THAN PSYKLOP!
HE NOW HAS MY PERMISSION TO GAIN HIS REVENGE!
GO, HULK! SEEK OUT THE ONE YOU HATE--
--AND KILL HIM!!

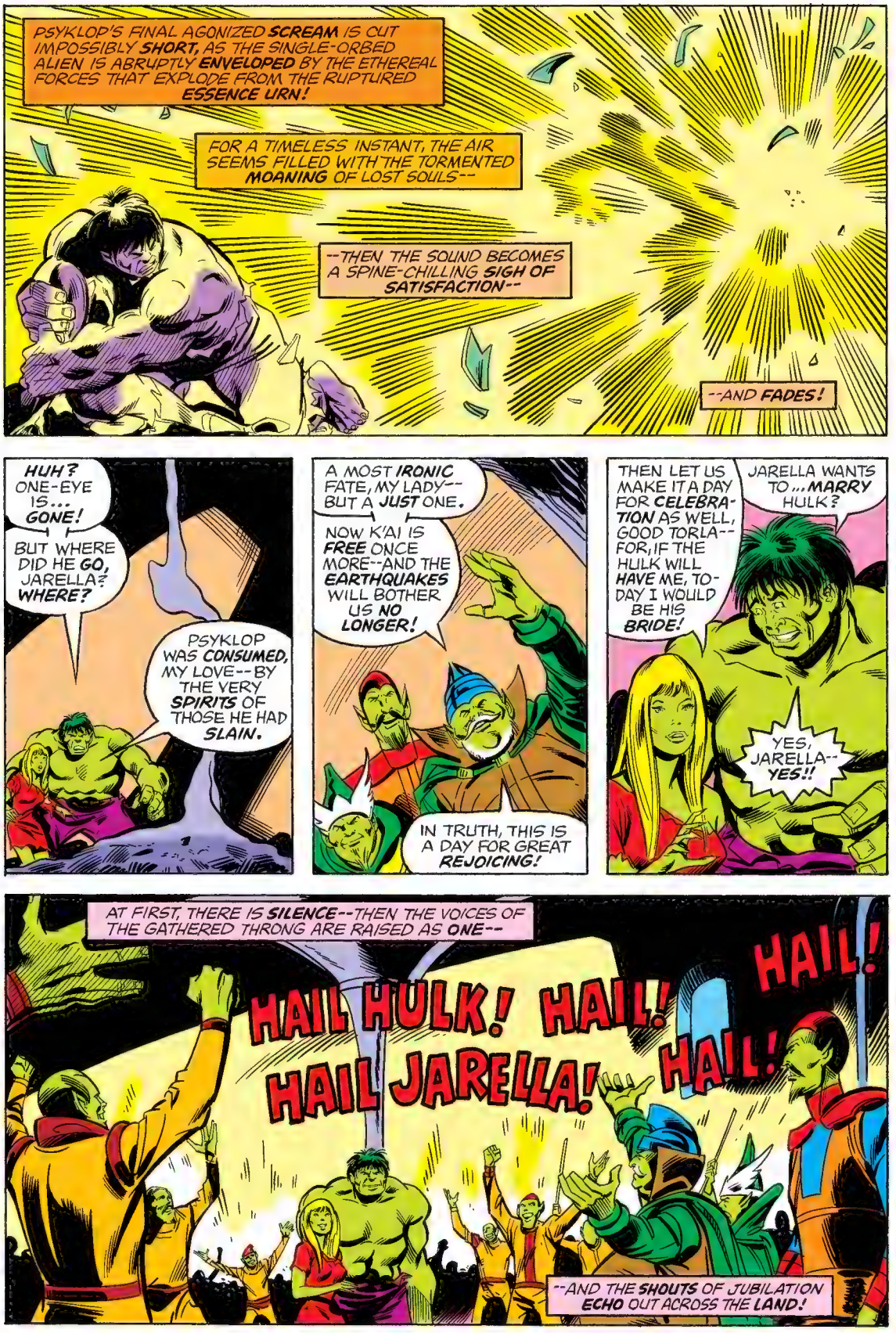
OUTSIDE PSYKLOP'S STRONGHOLD, THE PEOPLE OF K'AI--LED BY TORLA AND THE PANTHEON OF SORCERERS-- PRESS CAUTIOUSLY FORWARD...
...PREPARED FOR ALMOST ANYTHING...
...EXCEPT THE SUDDEN, UNEXPECTED APPEARANCE OF A RAMPAGING HULK!
WHERE IS PSYKLOP?
SHOW YOURSELF, ONE-EYE!-- AND HULK WILL SMASH!
HESITANTLY, UNCERTAINLY, THE MAKESHIFT WARRIORS APPROACH THE BRUTISH BEHEMOTH WHO ONE HAD BEEN THEIR ALLY--
--BUT THE FURIOUS HULK'S HYPNOTICALLY-TWISTED MIND SEES NOT THE GENTLE PRIMITIVES HE HAD KNOWN COMING CLOSER--
--BUT RATHER WHAT APPEARS TO BE A BLOOD-THIRSTY HORDE OF THE ALIEN CALLED--
"PSYKLOP!
SO! NOW MANY PSYKLOPS TRY TO ATTACK HULK--
--BUT HULK WILL STRIKE FIRST!

AND HULK WILL STRIKE HARDEST!
FLEE FOR YOUR LIVES! THE HULK HAS GONE MAD!
MAD? YES, ONE-EYE --HULK IS MAD!
HULK IS MAD THAT YOU TRIED TO HURT JARELLA!
HULK IS MAD THAT YOU TRIED TO TRICK HULK'S EYES!
BUT NOW HULK SEES YOU FOR WHAT YOU REALLY ARE!
POW!
HULK DOES NOT KNOW WHY THERE ARE SO MANY PSYKLOPS--
--BUT THAT WILL NOT STOP HULK FROM CRUSHING YOU ALL!
HOLI! MOLI! DO YOU HEAR THE MAN-MONSTER'S WORDS?
IT IS NOT OUR POOR BATTERED COMRADES HE IS FIGHTING!
SOMEHOW, HE BELIEVES HE DOES BATTLE WITH THE ONE-EYED DEMON WE CAME HERE TO CONFRONT!

IN SOME FASHION, THE ALIEN HAS ALTERED THE HULK'S PERCEPTIONS--
--SO THAT THE MIGHTY ONE NOW SEES OUR PEOPLE AS MANIFESTATIONS OF THE EVIL PSYKLOP HIMSELF!
OUR ONLY HOPE IS TO REPLACE THAT HATEFUL IMAGE WITH ANOTHER, MORE COMFORTING ILLUSION.
THUS LET THE PANTHEON OF SORCERERS NOW FORM THE MYSTIC TRIAD! LET US BEGIN THE ANCIENT CHANTS--
--AND, IF THE POWERS BE WILLING, LET US PREVAIL!
THE HULK, MEANWHILE, CONTINUES HIS MINDLESS RAMPAGE, SAVAGELY TOSSING THE ERSTWHILE EMERALD INVADERS ABOUT LIKE SO MANY SACKS OF WHEAT--
--UNTIL A BOLT OF MENTAL ENERGY FROM THE THREE GATHERED SORCERERS ABRUPTLY ROOTS THE MAN-BRUTE TO THE SPOT--
--AND THINGS SLOWLY BEGIN TO--CHANGE!
THE HULK BLINKS--AND THE COUNTLESS IMAGES OF PSYKLOP FALLEN AT HIS FEET--
--BEGIN TO SHIMMER LIKE SMOKE BEFORE HIS STARTLED EYES--
--THEN SUDDENLY ASSUME A FAR MORE APPEALING GUISE!
JARELLA?

IMPOSSIBLE! SOMEHOW THOSE SAVAGES HAVE BROKEN MY HYPNOTIC SPELL!
I MUST GET TO THE HULK SWIFTLY --BEFORE MY INFLUENCE WEARS OFF!
I ORDER YOU, HULK--RENEW YOUR ASSAULT!
THE ONE YOU HATE STANDS BEFORE YOU!
LASH OUT --AND DESTROY HIM!
NO! THE ONE HULK HATES STANDS BEHIND HULK-- THE ONE WHO TRIED TO TWIST HULK'S MIND!
YOU!
YOU ARE THE ONE HULK HATES, ONE-EYE!
YOU ARE THE ONE HULK WILL DESTROY!
NO! STAY BACK, BRUTE!
STAY BACK-- IF YOU VALUE YOUR WOMAN'S LIFE!
PLEASE--! LET ME GO, PSYKLOP--BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!
IT IS ALREADY TOO LATE, JARELLA! ONE-EYE DARED TO HURT YOU--
--AND FOR THAT, HULK WILL CRUSH ONE-EYE TO PULP!
FOOL! MY HYPNOTIC POWERS SUBDUED YOU ONCE, BUT THIS TIME THEY WILL...
NO! IT CAN'T BE! MY POWERS HAVE NO EFFECT ON HIM!
WHEN HE GETS THIS ANGRY, THERE IS NOTHING THAT CAN AFFECT HIM, PSYKLOP!
I BEG YOU--SURRENDER WHILE YOU STILL CAN!
NEVER! PSYKLOP SURRENDERS TO NO MAN! NOW BACK INSIDE, WOMAN!
BAH! HIDING INSIDE MOUNTAIN WILL NOT HELP YOU NOW, ONE-EYE!
NOTHING CAN SAVE YOU FROM HULK!

DARLING, PLEASE --BE CAREFUL! PSYKLOP HAS GONE INSANE!
DIE! DIE! CURSE YOU, MONSTER--WHY WON'T YOU DIE?
FIRST YOU WILL RELEASE HULK'S JARELLA, ONE-EYE--
--AND THEN WE WILL SEE WHO DIES!
THOOM!
NO! THE HULK'S BLOW BUCKLES THE VERY FLOOR--! CAN'T KEEP MY FOOTING--!
THEN AT LAST, PSYKLOP-- IT'S OVER!
ALL MY EFFORTS--ALL MY SUBTLE CALCULATIONS-- THEY CANNOT HAVE BEEN IN VAIN!
THE TIME OF COSMIC CONJUNCTION WILL BE UPON US IN MOMENTS--BUT SO LONG AS I POSSESS THE ESSENCE URN, I CAN STILL TRIUMPH!
THEN HULK WILL SMASH GLOWING JAR--BEFORE HULK SMASHES ONE-EYE!
PLEASE, HULK-- YOU CAN'T YOU'VE NO IDEA WHAT IS AT STAKE HERE!
BAH! HULK DOES NOT KNOW --AND HULK DOES NOT CARE!
AND ONCE HULK CRUSHES ONE-EYE, IT WILL MAKE NO DIFFERENCE--!
NO, MY LOVE-- THERE IS NO NEED FOR FURTHER VIOLENCE! THE BATTLE IS OVER, HULK--AND YOU HAVE WON.
HUH?
BY THE DARK GODS-- NO!
THE MAN-BRUTE'S SHOCK-WAVE HAS CRACKED THE ESSENCE URN!
I'VE GOT TO RESEAL IT BEFORE...


PSYKLOP'S FINAL AGONIZED SCREAM IS CUT IMPOSSIBLY SHORT, AS THE SINGLE-ORBED ALIEN IS ABRUPTLY ENVELOPED BY THE ETHEREAL FORCES THAT EXPLODE FROM THE RUPTURED ESSENCE URN!
FOR A TIMELESS INSTANT, THE AIR SEEMS FILLED WITH THE TORMENTED MOANING OF LOST SOULS--
--THEN THE SOUND BECOMES A SPINE-CHILLING SIGH OF SATISFACTION--
--AND FADES!
HUH? ONE-EYE IS... GONE!
BUT WHERE DID HE GO, JARELLA? WHERE?
PSYKLOP WAS CONSUMED, MY LOVE--BY THE VERY SPIRITS OF THOSE HE HAD SLAIN.
A MOST IRONIC FATE, MY LADY--BUT A JUST ONE.
NOW K'AI IS FREE ONCE MORE--AND THE EARTHQUAKES WILL BOTHER US NO LONGER!
IN TRUTH, THIS IS A DAY FOR GREAT REJOICING!
THEN LET US MAKE IT A DAY FOR CELEBRATION AS WELL, GOOD TORLA--FOR, IF THE HULK WILL HAVE ME, TODAY I WOULD BE HIS BRIDE!
JARELLA WANTS TO ...MARRY HULK?
YES, JARELLA--YES!!
AT FIRST, THERE IS SILENCE--THEN THE VOICES OF THE GATHERED THRONG ARE RAISED AS ONE--
HAIL HULK! HAIL! HAIL JARELLA! HAIL! HAIL!
--AND THE SHOUTS OF JUBILATION ECHO OUT ACROSS THE LAND!

BUT, AS ALWAYS, THE MAN-BRUTE'S HAPPINESS IS TERRIBLY SHORT-LIVED!
HUH? NOW RAY HITS HULK!
F-FEEL SO STRANGE--! DARLING, WHAT'S HAPPENING TO US?
WE ARE GROWING BIGGER, JARELLA--TURNING INTO GIANTS!
BUT WHY? WHY? HULK DOES NOT UNDERSTAND!
BY THE SEVEN-SIDED CIRCLE!
NOW, WE ARE SO BIG, EVEN MOUNTAIN CANNOT HOLD US!
BUT DO NOT WORRY, JARELLA. HULK WILL NOT LET NOTHING HURT YOU!
KRUMPP!
GODS OF K'AI! THEY HAVE GROWN SO HUGE THAT THEY HAVE VANISHED FROM OUR SIGHT!
IT IS THE SAME CURSE THAT HAS STOLEN THE HULK FROM US TWICE BEFORE--
--BUT THIS TIME IT HAS TAKEN OUR BELOVED QUEEN AS WELL!
BY NOW, THE HULK HAS GROWN ACCUSTOMED TO THE STRANGE SENSATION OF PASSAGE--BUT STILL HE MUST COMFORT HIS TENDER CHANGE...
DO NOT BE FRIGHTENED, JARELLA. HULK WILL PROTECT YOU.
I COULD NEVER BE FRIGHTENED, BELOVED--SO LONG AS I'M WITH YOU!
IN A TOP SECRET RESEARCH LAB DEEP BELOW GAMMA BASE, A SIMPLE GLASS SLIDE BEGINS TO GLOW WITH AN UNNATURAL LIGHT--
--AND THOSE GATHERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THIS MIRACLE BASK TRIUMPHANTLY IN ITS BRILLIANCE...
IT WORKED, GENERAL! SOMETHING IS MATERIALIZING ON THE SLIDE!
YOU'VE BROUGHT BACK THE HULK ALL RIGHT, SAMSON--

"--BUT YOU DIDN'T BRING HIM BACK ALONE!"
BAH! HULK SHOULD HAVE KNOWN--! ROSS DID THIS--ROSS AND THE ONE CALLED SAMSON!
WHY DO PUNY HUMANS NEVER LEAVE HULK ALONE?
PLEASE, BELOVED--CALM YOURSELF! IF IT IS THE WILL OF THE GODS THAT YOU RETURN TO THE WORK OF PINK-SKINNED MEN--
HUH?
--THEN PERHAPS IT IS FOR THE BEST.
I MUST RETURN TO K'AI, TO HELP REBUILD MY WORLD--AND THE GODS HAVE GIVEN ME A SIGN--
--THAT I MUST RETURN ALONE!
NO! WHEREVER JARELLA GOES, HULK GOES!
NO, MY LOVE...NOT THIS TIME. DESPITE ALL YOU HAVE DONE FOR THEM, MANY OF MY PEOPLE STILL DISTRUST YOU.
YOUR PRESENCE ON K'AI WOULD BE MORE A HINDRANCE THAN A HELP.
BUT WHEN MY TASK IS ENDED, WE WILL FIND ONE ANOTHER AGAIN, HULK... SOMEHOW.
HULK DOES NOT UNDERSTAND...
...BUT IF JARELLA DOES NOT WANT HULK ANYMORE, THEN HULK WILL LET HER GO.
DON'T KNOW HOW TO TELL YOU THIS, PEOPLE--BUT THE LADY'S NOT GOING ANYWHERE!
WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
"JUST TAKE A LOOK AT THE TRANSPORT PLATFORM--AND SEE FOR YOURSELF!"
N-NO! IT CANNOT BE--!
"BUT IT IS! THE SLIDE CONTAINING YOUR SUB-ATOMIC WORLD WAS SHATTERED BY THE ANGRY HULK!
"THERE'S NO PLACE LEFT FOR US TO SEND YOU!"

NEXT ISSUE: MRS. BRUCE BANNER? THE DEATH OF RICK JONES? THE TIME-TWISTING MENACE OF KRONUS, THE TEMPORAL MAN? YEP, ALL THIS AND MORE, IN THE SHOCKER WE CALL...

VICIOUS CIRCLE!

BE HERE!

INCREDIBLE HULK
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
204
OCT
02456
THE INCREDIBLE HULK®
HIS AWESOME ORIGIN... AS YOU'VE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE!!
THERE'S NO ESCAPE, BRUTE, FROM THE CENTURIES-SPANNING POWER OF KRONUS, MASTER OF TIME!!

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

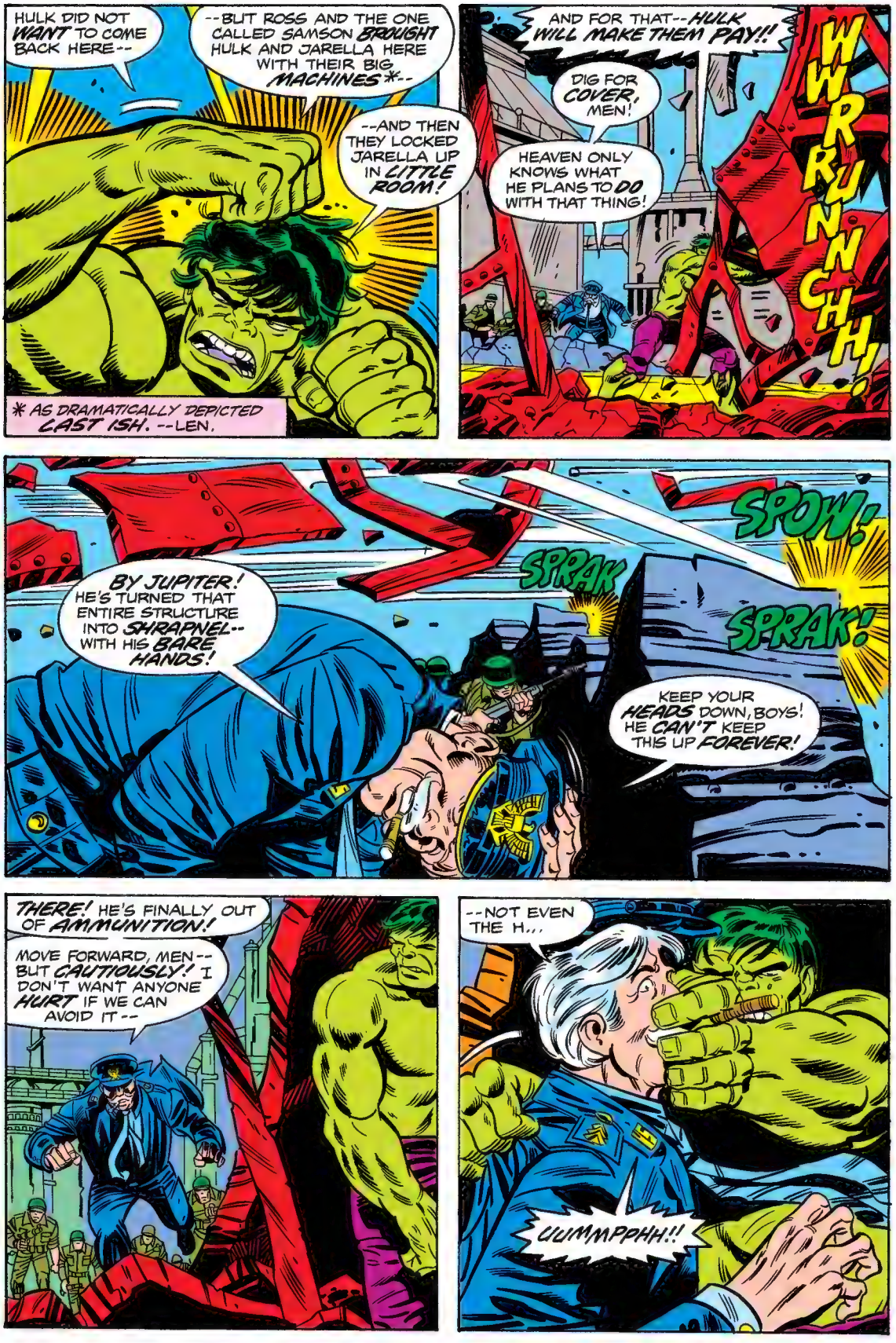
STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!™

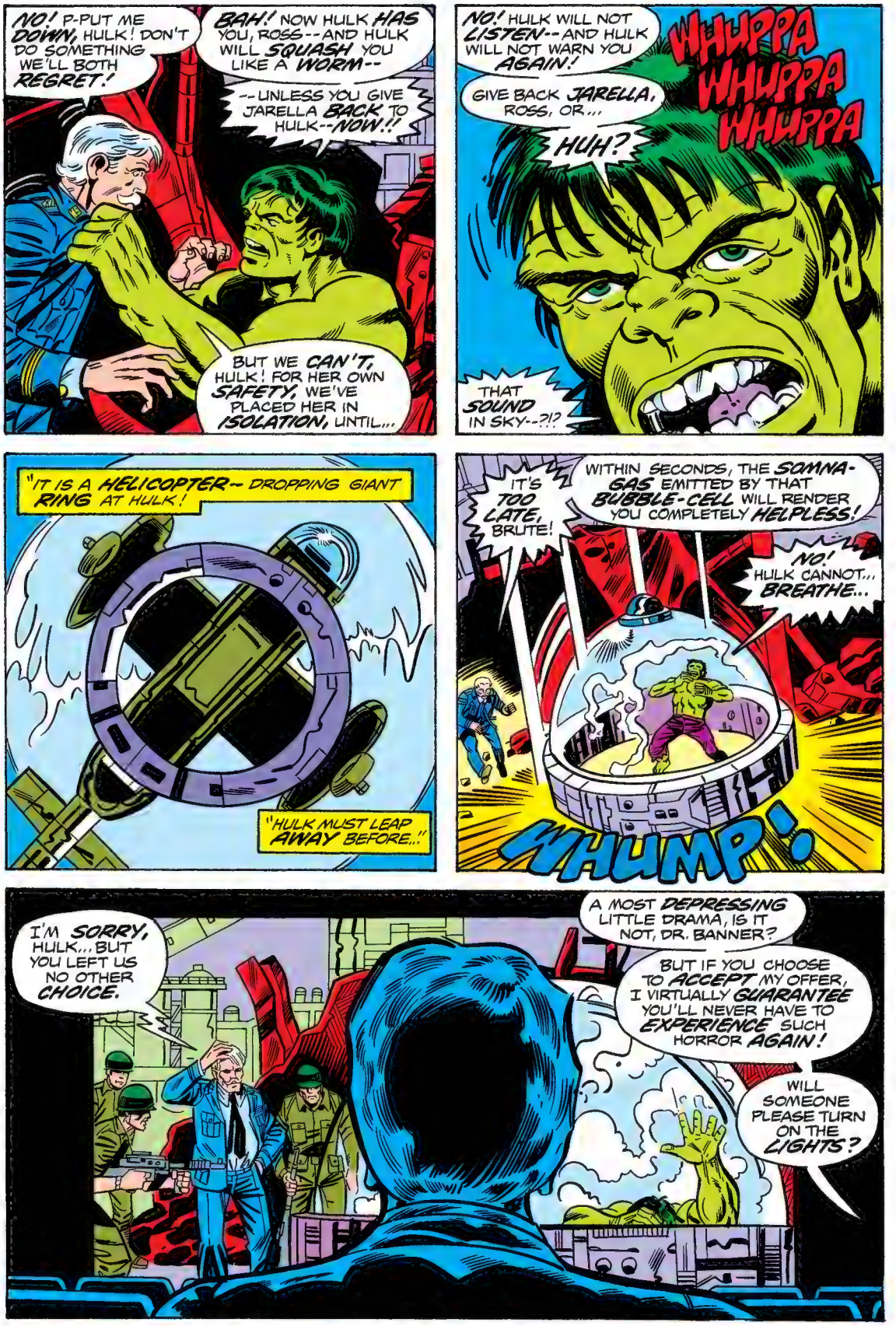
C-88

LEN WEIN SCRIPTER/EDITOR * **HERB TRIMPE** PLOTTER/PENCILLER * **JOE STATON** INKER/EMBELLISHER * **GLYNIS WEIN** colorist/fauvist * **JOHN COSTANZA** letterer/calligrapher

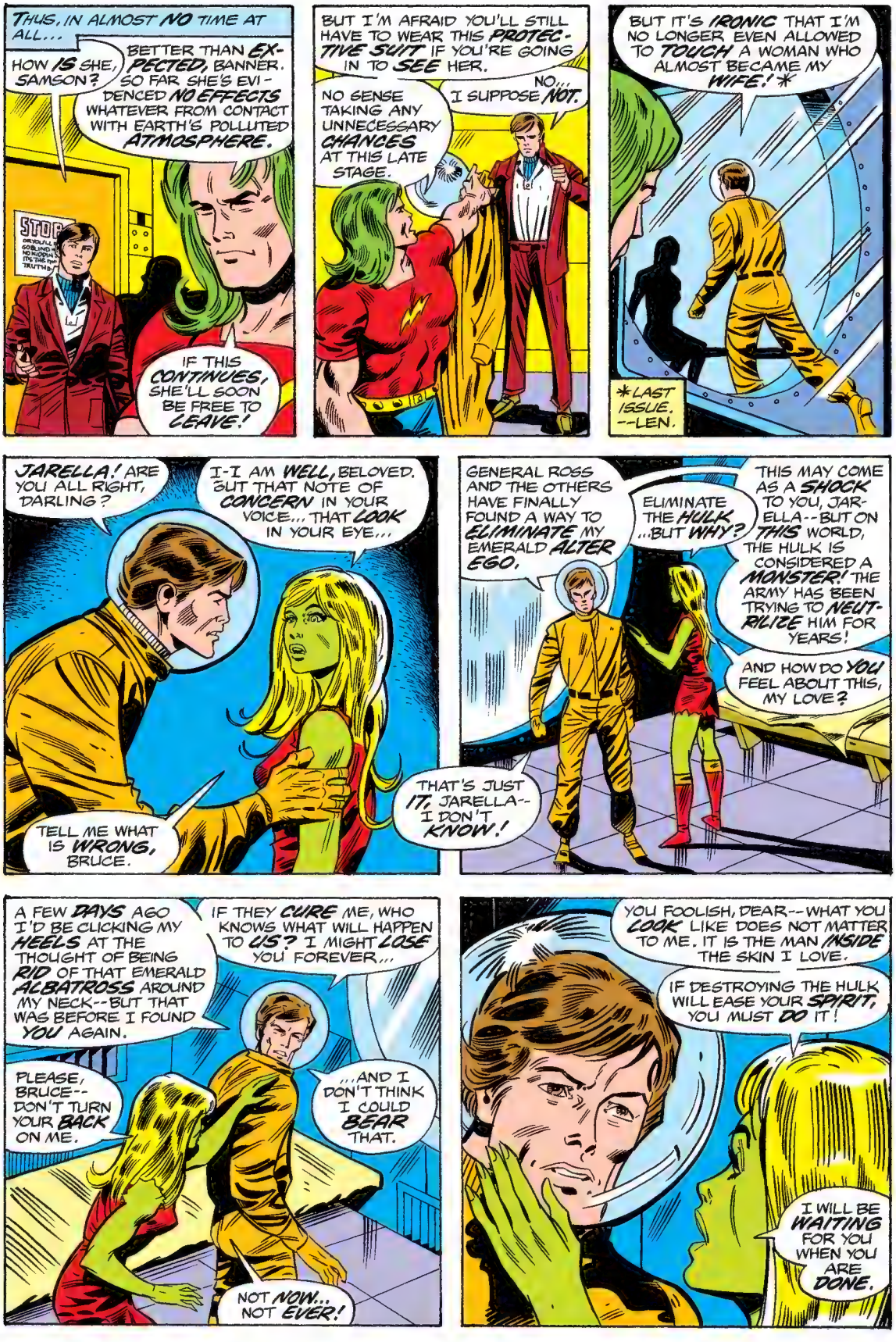
VICIOUS CIRCLE!

THERE HE IS, MEN! WE'VE GOT THE MAN-BRUTE CORNERED! NOW QUICKLY-- USE THE STUN-GRENADES!
FOR HIS OWN SAKE, WE'VE GOT TO CAPTURE THE HULK--BEFORE HE DESTROYS ALL OF GAMMA BASE!
BAH! NOTHING WILL STOP HULK NOW!
PUNY SOLDIERS TOOK HULK'S WOMAN AWAY FROM HULK--
--AND HULK WILL SMASH YOU ALL UNTIL YOU GIVE JARELLA BACK!!


HULK DID NOT WANT TO COME BACK HERE--
--BUT ROSS AND THE ONE CALLED SAMSON BROUGHT HULK AND JARELLA HERE WITH THEIR BIG MACHINES*--
--AND THEN THEY LOCKED JARELLA UP IN LITTLE ROOM!
* AS DRAMATICALLY DEPICTED CAST ISH. --LEN.
AND FOR THAT--HULK WILL MAKE THEM PAY!!
DIG FOR COVER, MEN!
HEAVEN ONLY KNOWS WHAT HE PLANS TO DO WITH THAT THING!
WRRUNNCHH!
BY JUPITER! HE'S TURNED THAT ENTIRE STRUCTURE INTO SHRAPNEL-- WITH HIS BARE HANDS!
SPRAK
SPOW!
SPRAK!
KEEP YOUR HEADS DOWN, BOYS! HE CAN'T KEEP THIS UP FOREVER!
THERE! HE'S FINALLY OUT OF AMMUNITION!
MOVE FORWARD, MEN-- BUT CAUTIOUSLY! I DON'T WANT ANYONE HURT IF WE CAN AVOID IT--
--NOT EVEN THE H...
UUMMPPHH!!

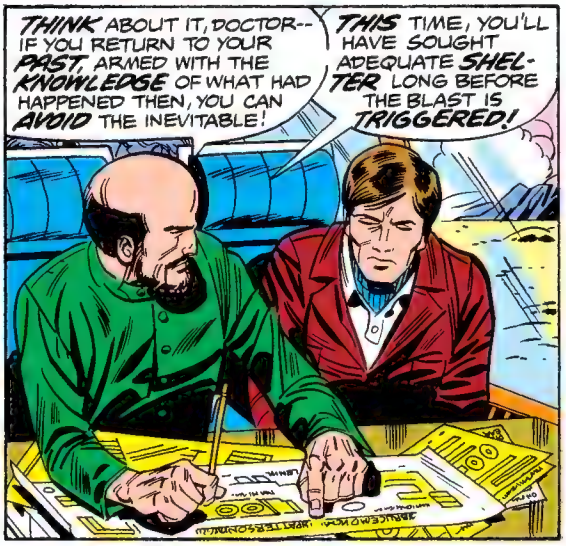

NO! P-PUT ME DOWN, HULK! DON'T DO SOMETHING WE'LL BOTH REGRET!
BAH! NOW HULK HAS YOU, ROSS--AND HULK WILL SQUASH YOU LIKE A WORM--
--UNLESS YOU GIVE JARELLA BACK TO HULK--NOW!!
BUT WE CAN'T, HULK! FOR HER OWN SAFETY, WE'VE PLACED HER IN ISOLATION, UNTIL...
NO! HULK WILL NOT LISTEN--AND HULK WILL NOT WARN YOU AGAIN!
GIVE BACK JARELLA, ROSS, OR...
HUH?
WHUPPA WHUPPA WHUPPA
THAT SOUND IN SKY--?!?
"IT IS A HELICOPTER-- DROPPING GIANT RING AT HULK!
"HULK MUST LEAP AWAY BEFORE..."
IT'S TOO LATE, BRUTE!
WITHIN SECONDS, THE SOMNA-GAS EMITTED BY THAT BUBBLE-CELL WILL RENDER YOU COMPLETELY HELPLESS!
NO! HULK CANNOT... BREATHE...
WHUMP!
I'M SORRY, HULK... BUT YOU LEFT US NO OTHER CHOICE.
A MOST DEPRESSING LITTLE DRAMA, IS IT NOT, DR. BANNER?
BUT IF YOU CHOOSE TO ACCEPT MY OFFER, I VIRTUALLY GUARANTEE YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO EXPERIENCE SUCH HORROR AGAIN!
WILL SOMEONE PLEASE TURN ON THE LIGHTS?

GRANTED, THERE ARE CERTAIN RISKS INVOLVED, DOCTOR--
--BUT IF EVERYTHING GOES AS PLANNED, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT YOU'LL BE RID OF THE HULK...FOREVER!
WELL--WHAT SAY YOU, MY BOY?
WE MUST BEGIN SOON-- IF CONDITIONS ARE TO REMAIN AT THEIR PEAK!
YOUR THEORY IS FASCINATING, PROFESSOR KRONUS...
...BUT I...
...I...
...I JUST DON'T KNOW!
I'M SORRY-- BUT THAT'S THE WAY IT IS!
SORRY? GOOD LORD, MAN-- DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?
THE HULK ALMOST FINISHED ME DURING THAT LAST ENCOUNTER--AND YET YOU'D GIVE UP THE CHANCE TO BE FREE OF HIM?
DON'T YOU REALIZE WHAT'S AT STAKE HERE?
THEY'VE SPENT MILLIONS ON THIS PROJECT, BRUCE--MONEY THAT COULD HAVE BEEN DEVOTED TO THE SICK--THE HUNGRY--!
YOU OWE IT TO THE WORLD TO GO THRU WITH THIS, BRUCE... YOU OWE IT TO YOURSELF!
DON'T YOU THINK I KNOW THAT, BETTY?
BUT I CAN'T MAKE A DECISION--ANY DECISION-- UNTIL I'VE SPOKEN TO JARELLA!
THIS AFFECTS HER AS MUCH AS IT DOES ME!
THEN GET ON WITH IT, BANNER! TIME IS RUNNING OUT!

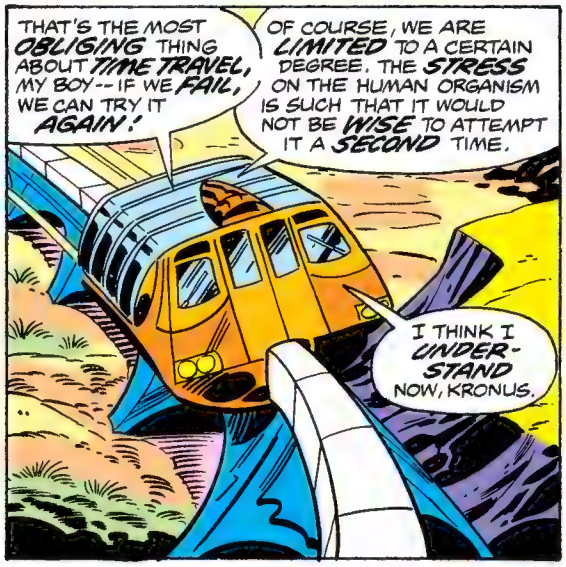

THUS, IN ALMOST NO TIME AT ALL...
HOW IS SHE, SAMSON?
BETTER THAN EXPECTED, BANNER. SO FAR SHE'S EVIDENCED NO EFFECTS WHATEVER FROM CONTACT WITH EARTH'S POLLUTED ATMOSPHERE.
IF THIS CONTINUES, SHE'LL SOON BE FREE TO LEAVE!
BUT I'M AFRAID YOU'LL STILL HAVE TO WEAR THIS PROTECTIVE SUIT IF YOU'RE GOING IN TO SEE HER.
NO... I SUPPOSE NOT.
NO SENSE TAKING ANY UNNECESSARY CHANCES AT THIS LATE STAGE.
BUT IT'S IRONIC THAT I'M NO LONGER EVEN ALLOWED TO TOUCH A WOMAN WHO ALMOST BECAME MY WIFE! *
* LAST ISSUE. --LEN.
JARELLA! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, DARLING?
I-I AM WELL, BELOVED. BUT THAT NOTE OF CONCERN IN YOUR VOICE... THAT LOOK IN YOUR EYE...
TELL ME WHAT IS WRONG, BRUCE.
GENERAL ROSS AND THE OTHERS HAVE FINALLY FOUND A WAY TO ELIMINATE MY EMERALD ALTER EGO.
ELIMINATE THE HULK ...BUT WHY?
THIS MAY COME AS A SHOCK TO YOU, JARELLA--BUT ON THIS WORLD, THE HULK IS CONSIDERED A MONSTER! THE ARMY HAS BEEN TRYING TO NEUTRALIZE HIM FOR YEARS!
AND HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS, MY LOVE?
THAT'S JUST IT, JARELLA-- I DON'T KNOW!
A FEW DAYS AGO I'D BE CLICKING MY HEELS AT THE THOUGHT OF BEING RID OF THAT EMERALD ALBATROSS AROUND MY NECK--BUT THAT WAS BEFORE I FOUND YOU AGAIN.
IF THEY CURE ME, WHO KNOWS WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO US? I MIGHT LOSE YOU FOREVER...
PLEASE, BRUCE-- DON'T TURN YOUR BACK ON ME.
...AND I DON'T THINK I COULD BEAR THAT.
NOT NOW... NOT EVER!
YOU FOOLISH, DEAR--WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE DOES NOT MATTER TO ME. IT IS THE MAN INSIDE THE SKIN I LOVE.
IF DESTROYING THE HULK WILL EASE YOUR SPIRIT, YOU MUST DO IT!
I WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU WHEN YOU ARE DONE.

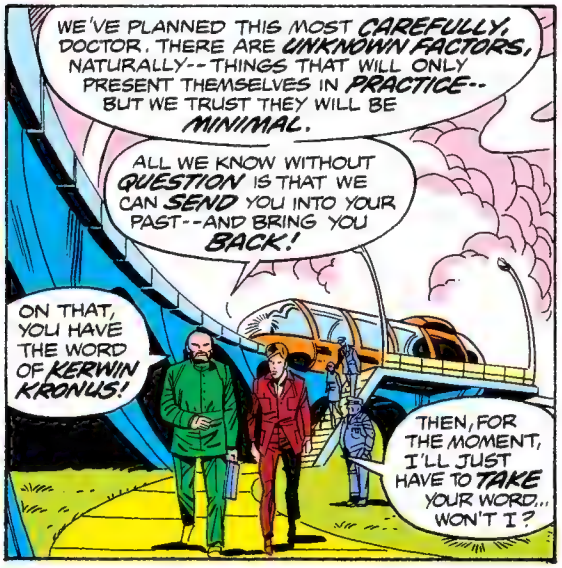
THUS...
LEONARD SAMSON ALERTED US TO YOUR RETURN, MY BOY.
THE MONORAIL IS READY TO LEAVE WHENEVER YOU ARE.
I'M AS READY AS I'LL EVER BE, KRONUS.
ALTHOUGH I'M STILL NOT CERTAIN WHAT ALL THIS IS ABOUT!

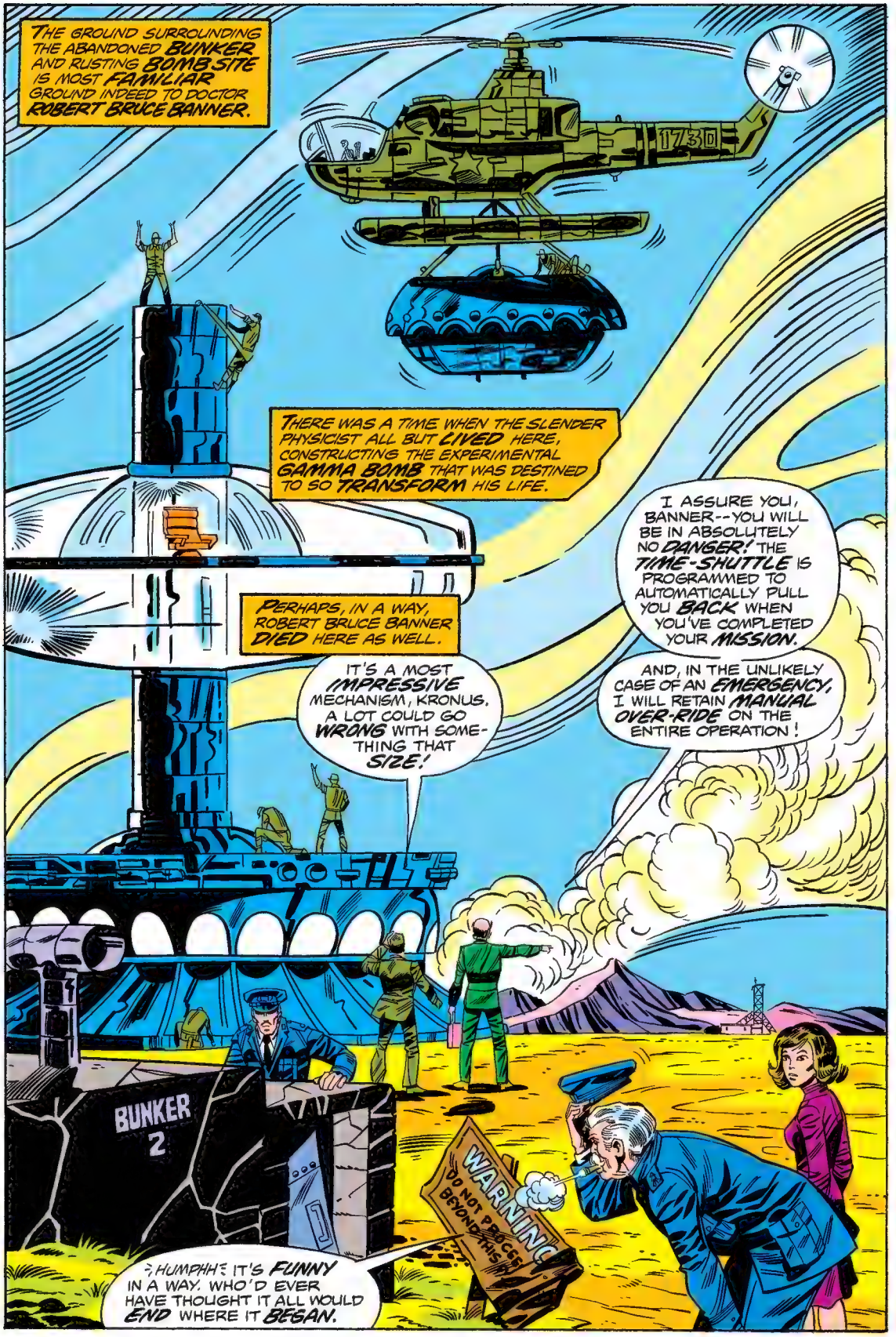
ESSENTIALLY, IT'S QUITE SIMPLE, DR. BANNER.
WE ARE GOING TO SEND YOU BACK THRU TIME--AND ENABLE YOU TO RELIVE THE EVENTS WHICH LED TO YOUR BECOMING THE HULK!
YOU'RE GOING TO... WHAT?!?

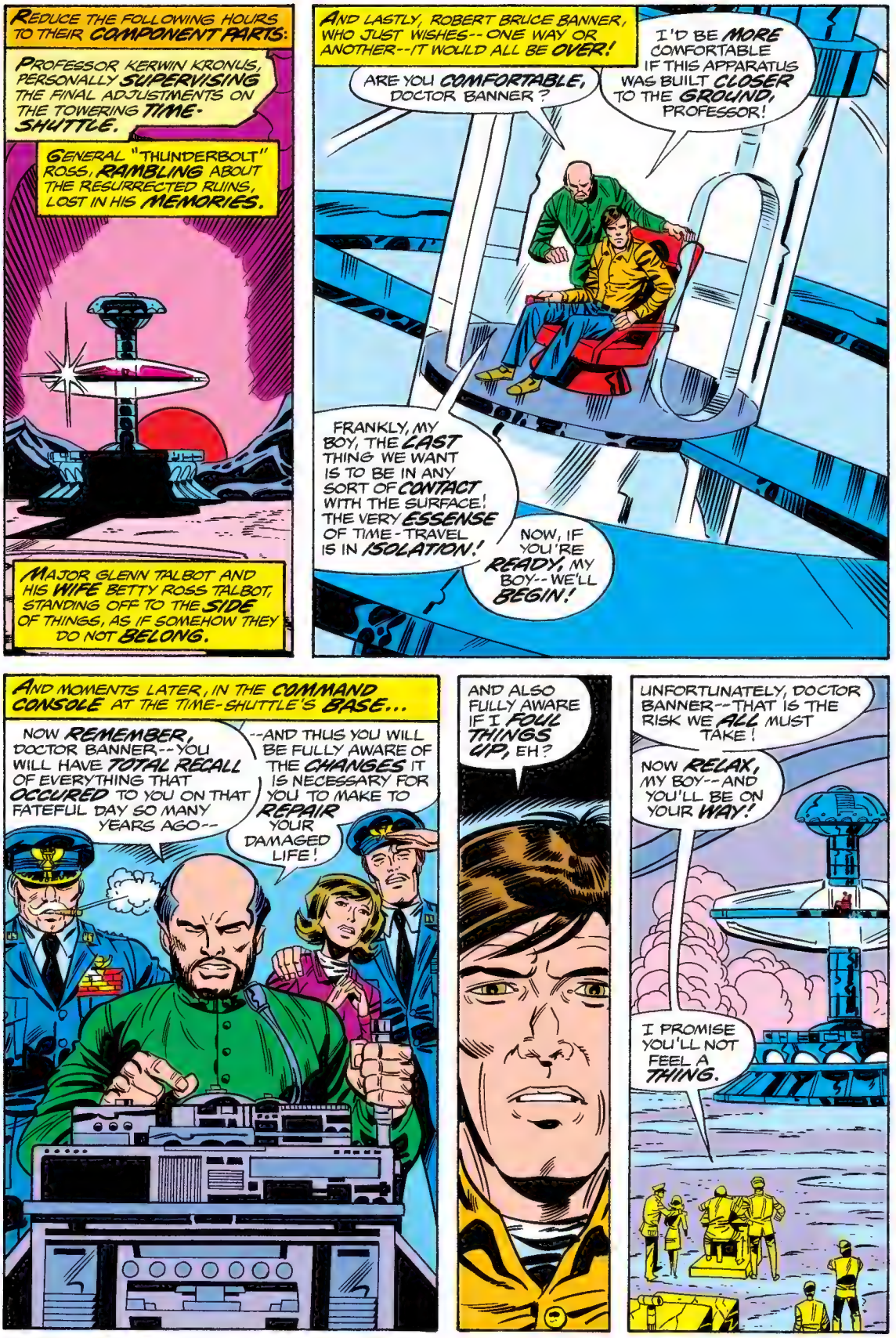

THINK ABOUT IT, DOCTOR--IF YOU RETURN TO YOUR PAST, ARMED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED THEN, YOU CAN AVOID THE INEVITABLE!
THIS TIME, YOU'LL HAVE SOUGHT ADEQUATE SHELTER LONG BEFORE THE BLAST IS TRIGGERED!

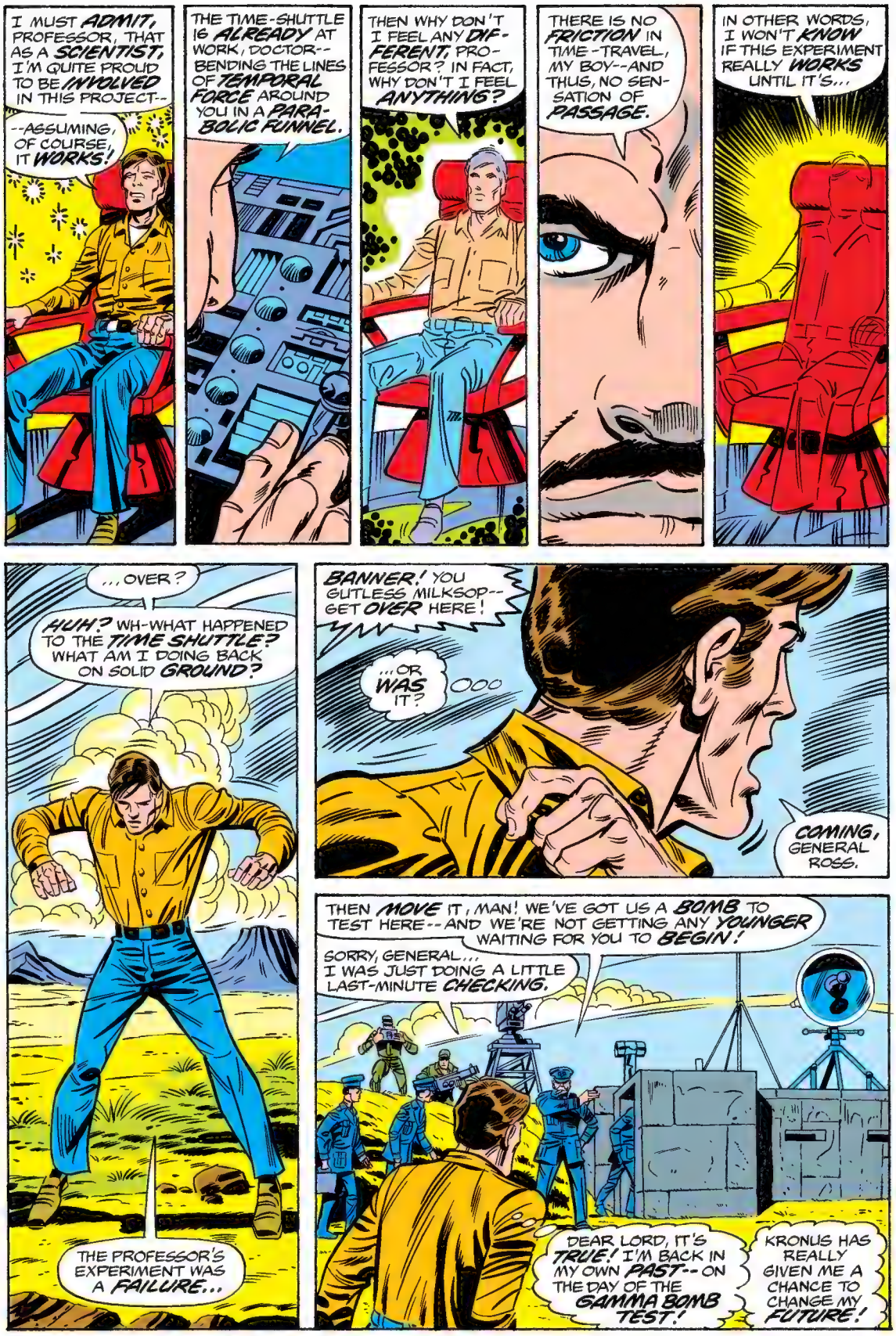
THIS TIME, WHEN THE GAMMA BOMB EXPLODES, YOU WILL NOT BE CAUGHT IN THE RADIATION BLAST!
BUT WHAT IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG?
WHAT IF THE SAME CATASTROPHE OCCURS ALL OVER AGAIN?

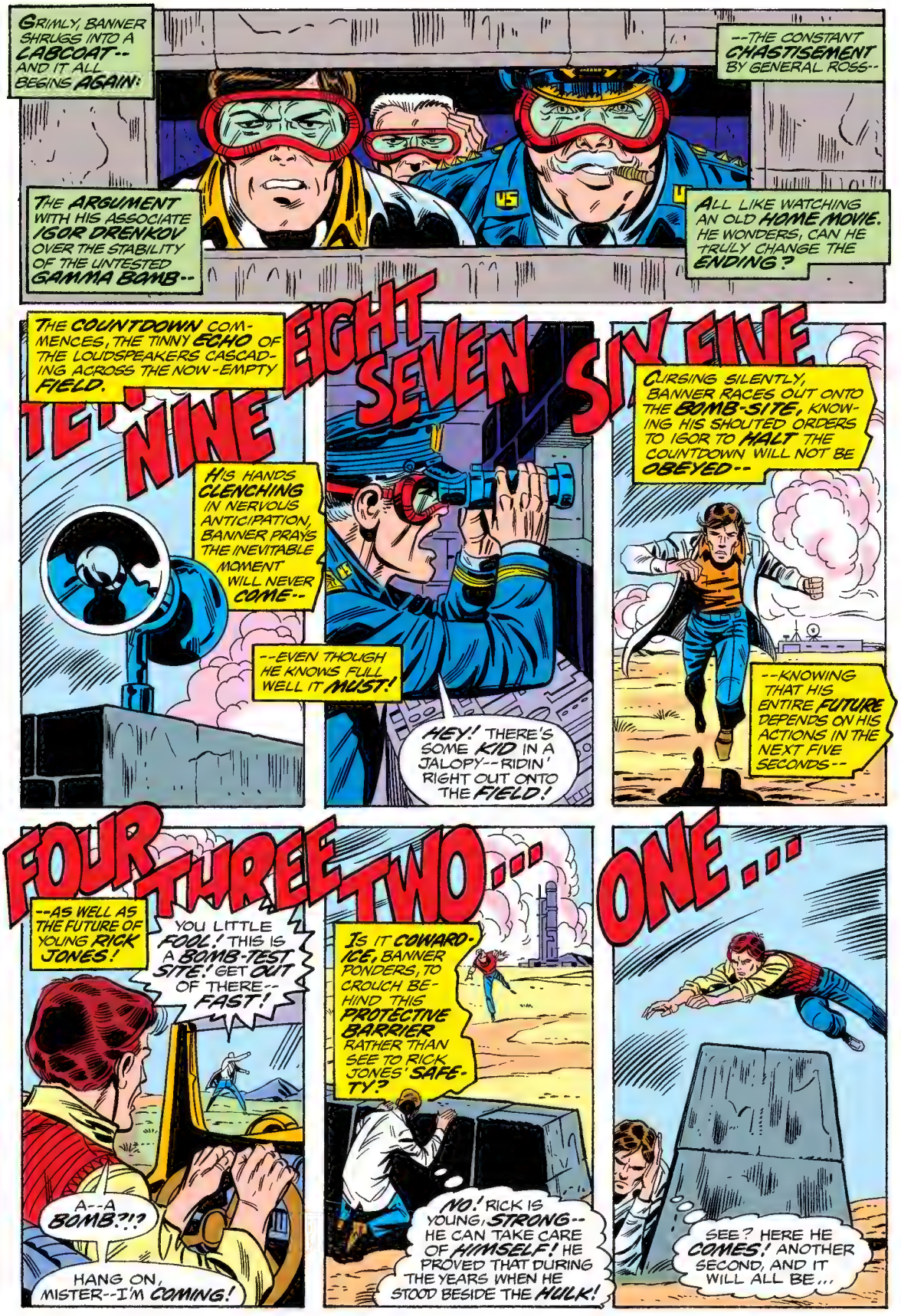

THAT'S THE MOST OBLIGING THING ABOUT TIME TRAVEL, MY BOY--IF WE FAIL, WE CAN TRY IT AGAIN!
OF COURSE, WE ARE LIMITED TO A CERTAIN DEGREE. THE STRESS ON THE HUMAN ORGANISM IS SUCH THAT IT WOULD NOT BE WISE TO ATTEMPT IT A SECOND TIME.
I THINK I UNDERSTAND NOW, KRONUS.


WE'VE PLANNED THIS MOST CAREFULLY, DOCTOR. THERE ARE UNKNOWN FACTORS, NATURALLY--THINGS THAT WILL ONLY PRESENT THEMSELVES IN PRACTICE--BUT WE TRUST THEY WILL BE MINIMAL.
ALL WE KNOW WITHOUT QUESTION IS THAT WE CAN SEND YOU INTO YOUR PAST--AND BRING YOU BACK!
ON THAT, YOU HAVE THE WORD OF KERWIN KRONUS!
THEN, FOR THE MOMENT, I'LL JUST HAVE TO TAKE YOUR WORD... WON'T I?

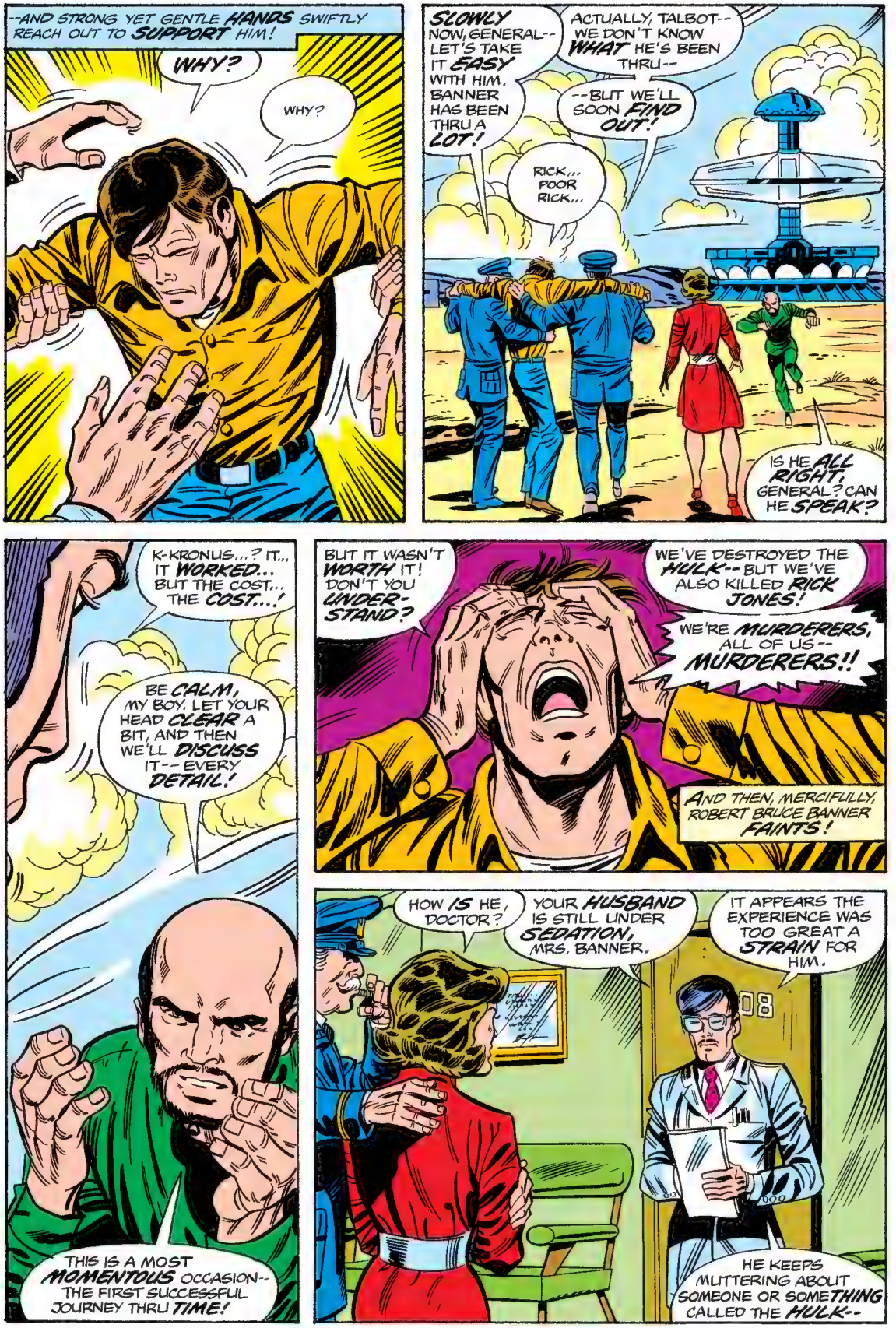

THE GROUND SURROUNDING THE ABANDONED BUNKER AND RUSTING BOMB SITE IS MOST FAMILIAR GROUND INDEED TO DOCTOR ROBERT BRUCE BANNER.
1730
THERE WAS A TIME WHEN THE SLENDER PHYSICIST ALL BUT LIVED HERE, CONSTRUCTING THE EXPERIMENTAL GAMMA BOMB THAT WAS DESTINED TO SO TRANSFORM HIS LIFE.
PERHAPS, IN A WAY, ROBERT BRUCE BANNER DIED HERE AS WELL.
I ASSURE YOU, BANNER--YOU WILL BE IN ABSOLUTELY NO DANGER! THE TIME-SHUTTLE IS PROGRAMMED TO AUTOMATICALLY PULL YOU BACK WHEN YOU'VE COMPLETED YOUR MISSION.
AND, IN THE UNLIKELY CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, I WILL RETAIN MANUAL OVER-RIDE ON THE ENTIRE OPERATION!
IT'S A MOST IMPRESSIVE MECHANISM, KRONUS. A LOT COULD GO WRONG WITH SOMETHING THAT SIZE!
BUNKER 2
WARNING DO NOT PROCEED BEYOND THIS
HUMPHH! IT'S FUNNY IN A WAY. WHO'D EVER HAVE THOUGHT IT ALL WOULD END WHERE IT BEGAN.

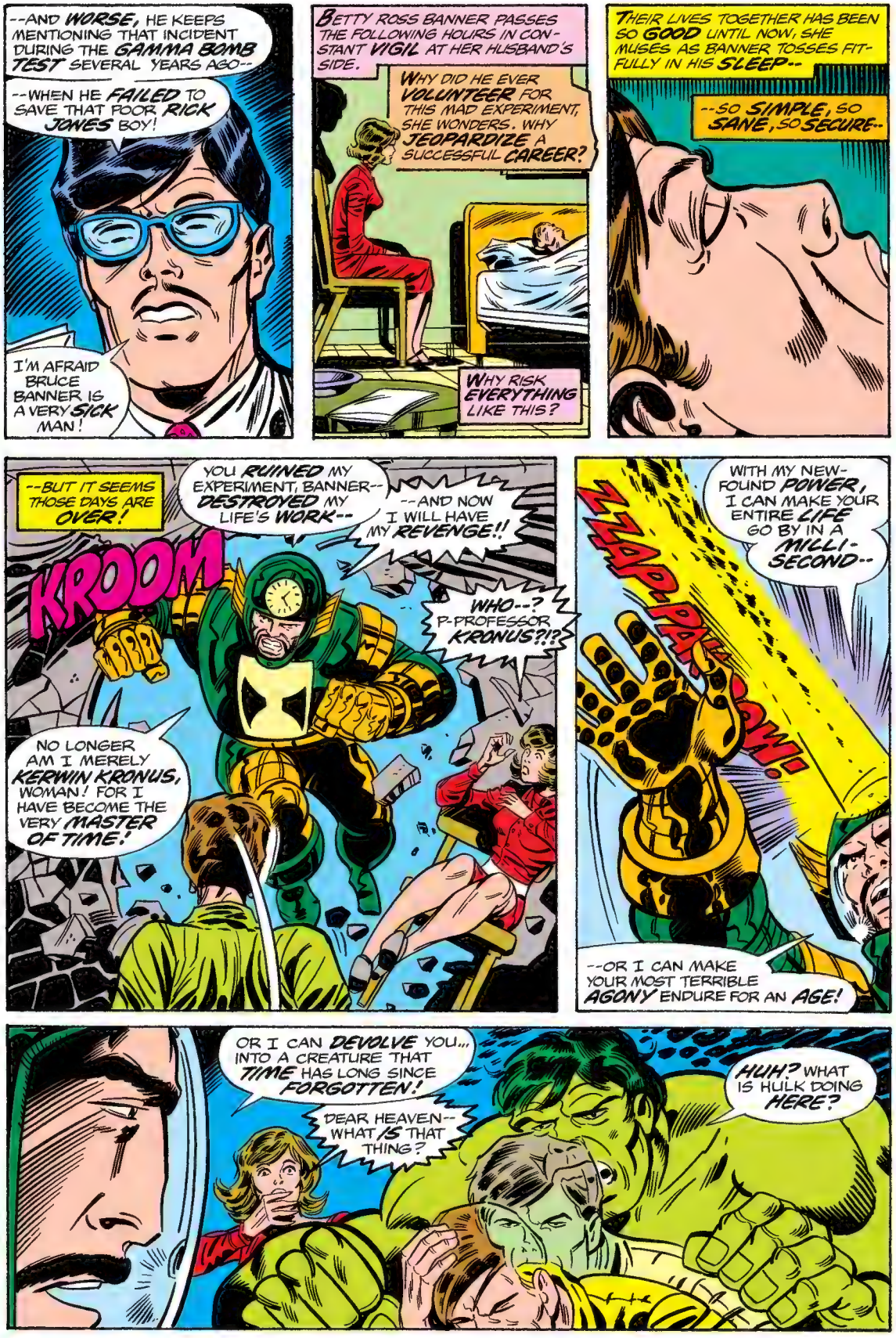

REDUCE THE FOLLOWING HOURS TO THEIR COMPONENT PARTS:
PROFESSOR KERWIN KRONUS, PERSONALLY SUPERVISING THE FINAL ADJUSTMENTS ON THE TOWERING TIME-SHUTTLE.
GENERAL "THUNDERBOLT" ROSS, RAMBLING ABOUT THE RESURRECTED RUINS, LOST IN HIS MEMORIES.
MAJOR GLENN TALBOT AND HIS WIFE BETTY ROSS TALBOT, STANDING OFF TO THE SIDE OF THINGS, AS IF SOMEHOW THEY DO NOT BELONG.
AND LASTLY, ROBERT BRUCE BANNER, WHO JUST WISHES--ONE WAY OR ANOTHER--IT WOULD ALL BE OVER!
ARE YOU COMFORTABLE, DOCTOR BANNER?
I'D BE MORE COMFORTABLE IF THIS APPARATUS WAS BUILT CLOSER TO THE GROUND, PROFESSOR!
FRANKLY, MY BOY, THE LAST THING WE WANT IS TO BE IN ANY SORT OF CONTACT WITH THE SURFACE! THE VERY ESSENSE OF TIME-TRAVEL IS IN ISOLATION!
NOW, IF YOU'RE READY, MY BOY--WE'LL BEGIN!
AND MOMENTS LATER, IN THE COMMAND CONSOLE AT THE TIME-SHUTTLE'S BASE...
NOW REMEMBER, DOCTOR BANNER--YOU WILL HAVE TOTAL RECALL OF EVERYTHING THAT OCCURED TO YOU ON THAT FATEFUL DAY SO MANY YEARS AGO--
--AND THUS YOU WILL BE FULLY AWARE OF THE CHANGES IT IS NECESSARY FOR YOU TO MAKE TO REPAIR YOUR DAMAGED LIFE!
AND ALSO FULLY AWARE IF I FOUL THINGS UP, EH?
UNFORTUNATELY, DOCTOR BANNER--THAT IS THE RISK WE ALL MUST TAKE!
NOW RELAX, MY BOY--AND YOU'LL BE ON YOUR WAY!
I PROMISE YOU'LL NOT FEEL A THING.


I MUST ADMIT, PROFESSOR, THAT AS A SCIENTIST, I'M QUITE PROUD TO BE INVOLVED IN THIS PROJECT--
--ASSUMING, OF COURSE, IT WORKS!
THE TIME-SHUTTLE IS ALREADY AT WORK, DOCTOR--BENDING THE LINES OF TEMPORAL FORCE AROUND YOU IN A PARABOLIC FUNNEL.
THEN WHY DON'T I FEEL ANY DIFFERENT, PROFESSOR? IN FACT, WHY DON'T I FEEL ANYTHING?
THERE IS NO FRICTION IN TIME-TRAVEL, MY BOY--AND THUS, NO SENSATION OF PASSAGE.
IN OTHER WORDS, I WON'T KNOW IF THIS EXPERIMENT REALLY WORKS UNTIL IT'S...
...OVER?
HUH? WH-WHAT HAPPENED TO THE TIME SHUTTLE? WHAT AM I DOING BACK ON SOLID GROUND?
THE PROFESSOR'S EXPERIMENT WAS A FAILURE...
BANNER! YOU GUTLESS MILKSOP--GET OVER HERE!
...OR WAS IT?
COMING, GENERAL ROSS.
THEN MOVE IT, MAN! WE'VE GOT US A BOMB TO TEST HERE--AND WE'RE NOT GETTING ANY YOUNGER WAITING FOR YOU TO BEGIN!
SORRY, GENERAL... I WAS JUST DOING A LITTLE LAST-MINUTE CHECKING.
DEAR LORD, IT'S TRUE! I'M BACK IN MY OWN PAST--ON THE DAY OF THE GAMMA BOMB TEST!
KRONUS HAS REALLY GIVEN ME A CHANCE TO CHANGE MY FUTURE!


GRIMLY, BANNER SHRUGS INTO A LABCOAT-- AND IT ALL BEGINS AGAIN:
--THE CONSTANT CHASTISEMENT BY GENERAL ROSS--
THE ARGUMENT WITH HIS ASSOCIATE IGOR DRENKOV OVER THE STABILITY OF THE UNTESTED GAMMA BOMB--
ALL LIKE WATCHING AN OLD HOME MOVIE. HE WONDERS, CAN HE TRULY CHANGE THE ENDING?
THE COUNTDOWN COMMENCES, THE TINNY ECHO OF THE LOUDSPEAKERS CASCADING ACROSS THE NOW-EMPTY FIELD.
TEN
NINE
EIGHT
SEVEN
SIX
FIVE
HIS HANDS CLENCHING IN NERVOUS ANTICIPATION, BANNER PRAYS THE INEVITABLE MOMENT WILL NEVER COME--
--EVEN THOUGH HE KNOWS FULL WELL IT MUST!
HEY! THERE'S SOME KID IN A JALOPY--RIDIN' RIGHT OUT ONTO THE FIELD!
CURSING SILENTLY, BANNER RACES OUT ONTO THE BOMB-SITE, KNOWING HIS SHOUTED ORDERS TO IGOR TO HALT THE COUNTDOWN WILL NOT BE OBEYED--
--KNOWING THAT HIS ENTIRE FUTURE DEPENDS ON HIS ACTIONS IN THE NEXT FIVE SECONDS--
FOUR
THREE
TWO...
ONE...
--AS WELL AS THE FUTURE OF YOUNG RICK JONES!
YOU LITTLE FOOL! THIS IS A BOMB-TEST SITE! GET OUT OF THERE-- FAST!
A--A BOMB?!?
HANG ON, MISTER--I'M COMING!
IS IT COWARDICE, BANNER PONDERS, TO CROUCH BEHIND THIS PROTECTIVE BARRIER RATHER THAN SEE TO RICK JONES' SAFETY?
NO! RICK IS YOUNG, STRONG-- HE CAN TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF! HE PROVED THAT DURING THE YEARS WHEN HE STOOD BESIDE THE HULK!
SEE? HERE HE COMES! ANOTHER SECOND, AND IT WILL ALL BE...

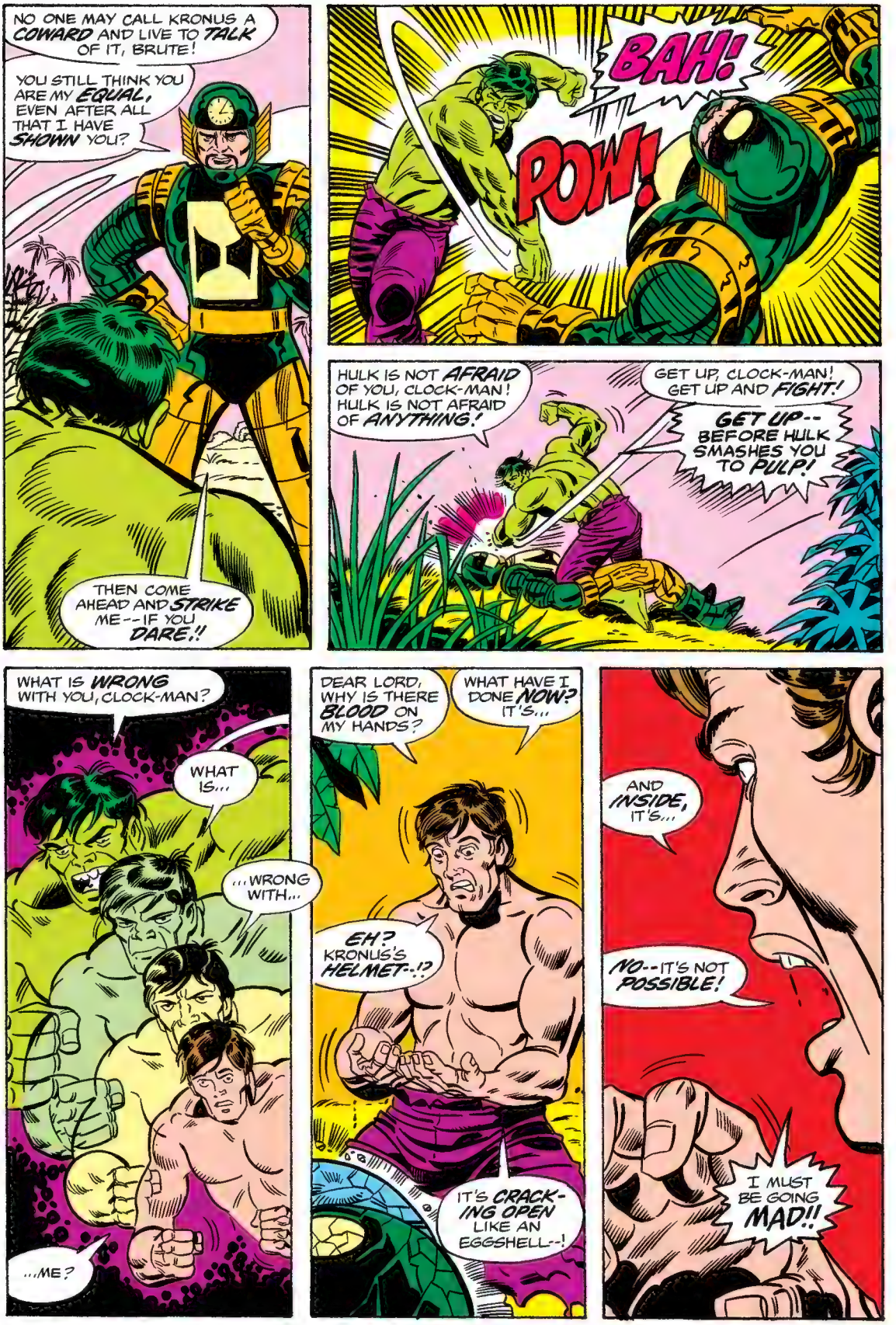
...OVER!
WHOOO


--AND STRONG YET GENTLE HANDS SWIFTLY REACH OUT TO SUPPORT HIM!
WHY?
WHY?
SLOWLY NOW, GENERAL-- LET'S TAKE IT EASY WITH HIM. BANNER HAS BEEN THRU A LOT!
ACTUALLY, TALBOT-- WE DON'T KNOW WHAT HE'S BEEN THRU--
--BUT WE'LL SOON FIND OUT!
RICK... POOR RICK...
IS HE ALL RIGHT, GENERAL? CAN HE SPEAK?
K-KRONUS...? IT... IT WORKED... BUT THE COST... THE COST...!
BE CALM, MY BOY. LET YOUR HEAD CLEAR A BIT, AND THEN WE'LL DISCUSS IT-- EVERY DETAIL!
THIS IS A MOST MOMENTOUS OCCASION-- THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL JOURNEY THRU TIME!
BUT IT WASN'T WORTH IT! DON'T YOU UNDER-STAND?
WE'VE DESTROYED THE HULK-- BUT WE'VE ALSO KILLED RICK JONES!
WE'RE MURDERERS, ALL OF US-- MURDERERS!!
AND THEN, MERCIFULLY, ROBERT BRUCE BANNER FAINTS!
HOW IS HE, DOCTOR?
YOUR HUSBAND IS STILL UNDER SEDATION, MRS. BANNER.
IT APPEARS THE EXPERIENCE WAS TOO GREAT A STRAIN FOR HIM.
HE KEEPS MUTTERING ABOUT SOMEONE OR SOMETHING CALLED THE HULK--

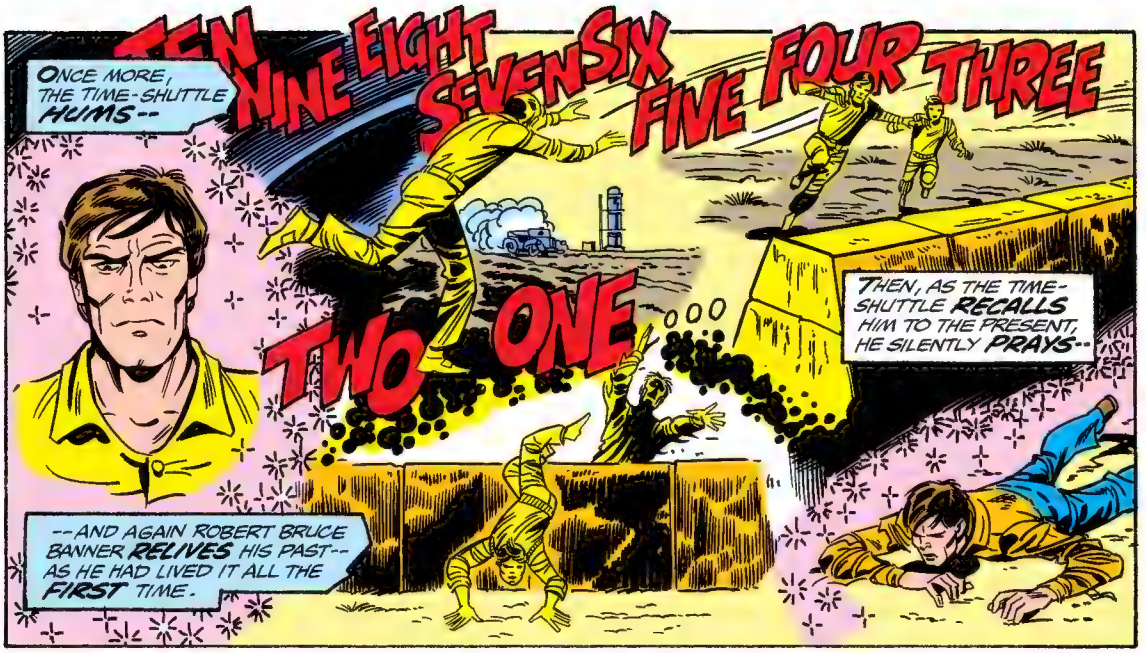

--AND WORSE, HE KEEPS MENTIONING THAT INCIDENT DURING THE GAMMA BOMB TEST SEVERAL YEARS AGO--
--WHEN HE FAILED TO SAVE THAT POOR RICK JONES BOY!
I'M AFRAID BRUCE BANNER IS A VERY SICK MAN!
BETTY ROSS BANNER PASSES THE FOLLOWING HOURS IN CONSTANT VIGIL AT HER HUSBAND'S SIDE.
WHY DID HE EVER VOLUNTEER FOR THIS MAD EXPERIMENT, SHE WONDERS. WHY JEOPARDIZE A SUCCESSFUL CAREER?
WHY RISK EVERYTHING LIKE THIS?
THEIR LIVES TOGETHER HAS BEEN SO GOOD UNTIL NOW, SHE MUSES AS BANNER TOSSES FITFULLY IN HIS SLEEP--
--SO SIMPLE, SO SANE, SO SECURE--
--BUT IT SEEMS THOSE DAYS ARE OVER!
YOU RUINED MY EXPERIMENT, BANNER-- DESTROYED MY LIFE'S WORK--
--AND NOW I WILL HAVE MY REVENGE!!
KROOM
WHO--? P-PROFESSOR KRONUS?!?
NO LONGER AM I MERELY KERWIN KRONUS, WOMAN! FOR I HAVE BECOME THE VERY MASTER OF TIME!
ZZAP-PAP-POW!
WITH MY NEW-FOUND POWER, I CAN MAKE YOUR ENTIRE LIFE GO BY IN A MILLI-SECOND--
--OR I CAN MAKE YOUR MOST TERRIBLE AGONY ENDURE FOR AN AGE!
OR I CAN DEVOLVE YOU... INTO A CREATURE THAT TIME HAS LONG SINCE FORGOTTEN!
DEAR HEAVEN-- WHAT IS THAT THING?
HUH? WHAT IS HULK DOING HERE?

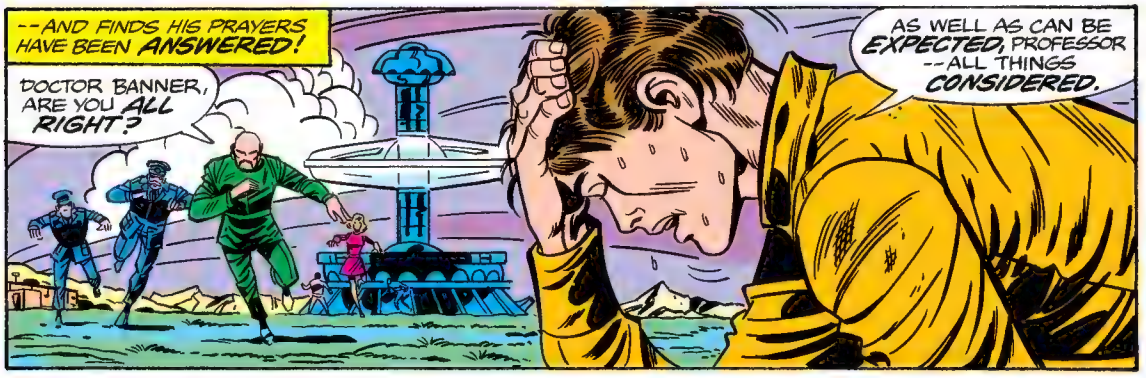
I SUMMONED YOU, MAN-BRUTE--TO PUT AN END TO YOU FOR...
UUNNGGHH!!
BAH! BEFORE YOU CAN SMASH HULK, CLOCK-MAN--
SKRASH
--HULK WILL SMASH YOU!!
HUH? CLOCK-MAN IS STILL STANDING!
OF COURSE, MONSTER! YOU COULD DESTROY THIS ENTIRE CITY BEFORE YOU COULD INJURE THE TEMPORAL MAN!
BUT WHY SHOULD I LET YOU WREAK HAVOC WHERE INNOCENT PEOPLE MAY BE HARMED--
WHIRRRRRRRRRR-Z-Z
--WHEN MERELY BY EXERCISING MY CENTURIES-SPANNING POWER--
ZAPOW!
--I CAN REMOVE US TO A SETTING FAR MORE FITTING FOR THE BATTLE YET TO COME--
--THE LAND OF ONE MILLION YEARS B.C.!
HUH? SUDDENLY HULK IS IN JUNGLE-- SURROUNDED BY GIANT LIZARDS!?!

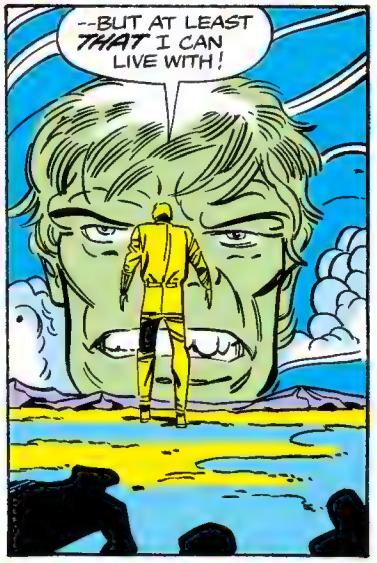
BUT IT ISN'T THE DINOSAURS YOU'LL HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT, BRUTE--
--IT'S KRONUS!!
POW!
BAH! HULK WILL CRUSH PUNY CLOCK-MAN LIKE A BUG!
MINDLESS FOOL! I NEED ONLY MOVE AN INSTANT FORWARD IN TIME TO AVOID ANY-THING YOU CAN TOSS AT ME--
--BUT I PREFER THE SATISFACTION OF DEFEATING YOU IN MY OWN UNIQUE FASHION!
TO ELIMINATE THE THREAT OF THAT ROCK, FOR EXAMPLE--
--I SIMPLY MOVE IT A BILLION YEARS BACK THRU TIME TO WHEN IT WAS FORMED FROM MOLTEN LAVA!
JUST AS I CAN TAKE THE VERY AREA YOU NOW OCCUPY--
--AND MOVE IT COUNTLESS YEARS AHEAD TO THE UPCOMING ICE AGE!
--BUT I TRUST I'VE MADE MY POINT!
THE BLINK OF AN EYE AND THE ICE IS GONE, BRUTE--
HOW CAN YOU HOPE TO DEFEAT A MAN WHO BENDS TIME TO HIS VERY WILL?
STAND STILL AND FIGHT, COWARD! STAND STILL SO HULK CAN SMASH!
A MAN WHO CONTROLS THE AGES WITH AN IRON HAND?


NO ONE MAY CALL KRONUS A COWARD AND LIVE TO TALK OF IT, BRUTE!
YOU STILL THINK YOU ARE MY EQUAL, EVEN AFTER ALL THAT I HAVE SHOWN YOU?
THEN COME AHEAD AND STRIKE ME--IF YOU DARE!!
BAH!
POW!
HULK IS NOT AFRAID OF YOU, CLOCK-MAN! HULK IS NOT AFRAID OF ANYTHING!
GET UP, CLOCK-MAN! GET UP AND FIGHT!
GET UP-- BEFORE HULK SMASHES YOU TO PULP!
WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU, CLOCK-MAN?
WHAT IS...
...WRONG WITH...
...ME?
DEAR LORD, WHY IS THERE BLOOD ON MY HANDS?
WHAT HAVE I DONE NOW? IT'S...
EH? KRONUS'S HELMET--!?
IT'S CRACK-ING OPEN LIKE AN EGGSHELL--!
AND INSIDE, IT'S...
NO--IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!
I MUST BE GOING MAD!!

IT'S RICK-- RICK JONES!!
DEAR GOD-- I'VE KILLED HIM AGAIN!!
I'VE KILLED HIM!
BRUCE!
KILLED HIM!!
BRUCE!
KILLED HIM!!
BRUCE!
BRUCE!
BRUCE-- WAKE UP, DARLING! YOU'RE HAVING A NIGHTMARE!
N-NIGHTMARE?
ONLY A NIGHT-MARE?
NO, IT WAS MORE THAN THAT, BETTY-- MUCH MORE!
FORGIVE ME, BETTY--BUT THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO DO!
BRUCE? WH-WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
COME BACK, DARLING! PLEASE--
603
--COME BACK.
BUT THERE IS NO TURN-ING BACK NOW.
ALMOST BLINDLY, BRUCE BANNER RUSHES FROM THE HOSPITAL--
--AND BACK OUT INTO THE DESERT!
THE TIME-SHUTTLE STILL STANDS THERE--
--JUTTING FROM THE SAND LIKE AN OBSCENE MONUMENT TO A DREAM THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN--
--A DREAM THAT DIED STILLBORN!
I'VE GOT TO GO BACK--TRY TO CORRECT MY MISTAKE!
IT'S NOT TOO LATE--! IT CAN'T BE TOO LATE--!
I'VE GOT ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD!


ONCE MORE, THE TIME-SHUTTLE HUMS--
TEN NINE EIGHT SEVEN SIX FIVE FOUR THREE TWO ONE
THEN, AS THE TIME-SHUTTLE RECALLS HIM TO THE PRESENT, HE SILENTLY PRAYS--
--AND AGAIN ROBERT BRUCE BANNER RELIVES HIS PAST-- AS HE HAD LIVED IT ALL THE FIRST TIME.


--AND FINDS HIS PRAYERS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED!
DOCTOR BANNER, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
AS WELL AS CAN BE EXPECTED, PROFESSOR --ALL THINGS CONSIDERED.



NEXT ISSUE:

DEATH ENTERS THE PICTURE, IN THE POWERFUL FIGURE OF THE UNCANNY CRYPTO-MAN! JOIN JADE-JAWS AND JARELLA FOR...

DO NOT FORSAKE ME!

INCREDIBLE HULK
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THE INCREDIBLE HULK®
IN SAVAGE COMBAT WITH THE CRYPTO-MAN!
ON THE CITY STREETS, DEATH IS WAITING!
I POSSESS... THE POWER!
THE POWER TO DESTROY THE HULK!!

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!™

LEN WEIN WRITER/EDITOR * SAL BUSCEMA & JOE STATON ILLUSTRATORS * GLYNIS WEIN COLORIST * JOHN COSTANZA LETTERER

DO NOT FORSAKE ME!

PORTRAIT OF THE **MONSTER** AS A YOUNG MAN:

June's Boutique

SHOES

IT ISN'T **OFTEN** THAT DOCTOR ROBERT BRUCE BANNER CAN BESTRIDE THE BUSY STREETS OF ANY CITY, COMPLETELY OF HIS OWN **ACCORD.**

USUALLY, HE JUST FINDS HIMSELF LEFT **STRANDED** THERE BY HIS EMERALD **ALTER-EGO.**

BUT NOW, THE SLENDER PHYSICIST WALKS THE DUSTY STREETS OF SANTA FE WITH A **SPRING** IN HIS STEP, A **SMILE** ON HIS LIPS --AND THE **WOMAN** THAT HE **LOVES** ON HIS ARM.

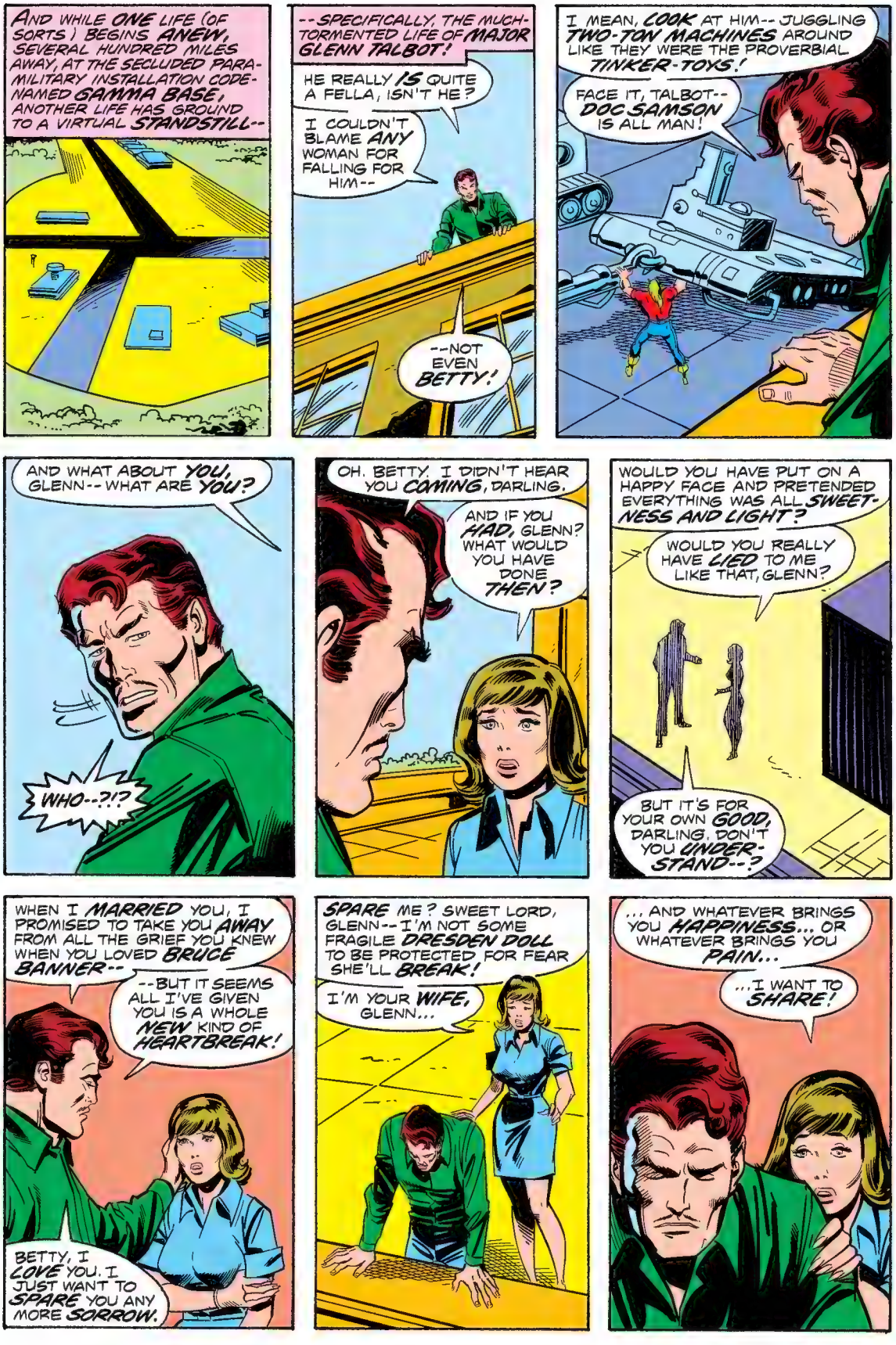
WHILE, IN THE DARKEST RECESSES OF BRUCE BANNER'S **MIND,** THE GROTESQUE **HULK** LIES WAITING...

...WAITING...

WELL, JARELLA-- HOW DOES EARTH COMPARE TO THE MICRO-WORLD OF K'AI?
MY HOMEWORLD SEEMS SO... SO PRIMITIVE BESIDE YOURS, BELOVED.
EACH NEW DISCOVERY I MAKE HERE IS MORE AMAZING THAN THE LAST.
ACTUALLY, IT'S ONLY OUR TECHNOLOGY THAT'S ALL THAT DIFFERENT, SWEETHEART.
IN MANY WAYS, OUR PEOPLE ARE VERY MUCH ALIKE!
HEY, WILL YA TAKE A LOOK AT THAT LIVING DOLL?
MAN, TALK ABOUT TOO MUCH MAKE-UP! HER WHOLE FACE LOOKS GREEN.
BUT WHAT THE HECK? VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE, RIGHT?
HEY, SUGAR--WHAT SAY YA DITCH THE CREEP, AN' HOOK UP WITH A REAL MAN?
OKAY, THAT'S ENOUGH! WHY DON'T YOU FELLAS JUST LAY OFF-- BEFORE SOMEBODY GETS HURT!
WELL, WHATTYA KNOW-- A TOUGH GUY!
LOOK, I'M WARNING YOU! FOR YOUR OWN SAKES, DON'T MAKE ME MAD--
--OR THEY'LL HAVE TO SCRAPE YOU ALL OFF THE SIDEWALK WITH A TROWEL!
I'VE GONE THRU ENOUGH GARBAGE LATELY, WITHOUT HAVING TO PUT UP WITH... WITH...
BELOVED, PLEASE-- CALM YOURSELF! YOU KNOW WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN IF YOU BECOME ANGRY!
PLEASE--THOSE MEN SIMPLY ARE NOT WORTH THAT!
YES... OF COURSE... Y-YOU'RE RIGHT. I'M... CALM NOW.
IT JUST BECOMES SO EASY SOMETIMES TO WANT TO GIVE IN TO THE IMPULSE --AND LET HIM TAKE OVER!
D-DARLING...?

NEVER MIND, JARELLA, LET'S JUST GET AWAY FROM HERE--
--BEFORE I CHANGE MY MIND!
G'WAN, YA CRAZY LUNATIC-- TAKE A WALK!
YOU AN' THAT PASTY-FACED CHICK OF YOURS DESERVE EACH OTHER!
HE'S RIGHT! WE DO DESERVE EACH OTHER--A SKINNY SCIENTIST WITH A HALF-TON MONSTER ON HIS BACK, AND A QUEEN WHO'S LOST HER KINGDOM!
WE MAKE QUITE A PAIR, DON'T WE?
BUT I WOULD HAVE IT NO OTHER WAY, MY LOVE.
YOU ARE ALL I HAVE LEFT NOW THAT MY NATIVE WORLD IS FOREVER LOST TO ME--AND BEFORE I WOULD LOSE YOU AS WELL, I WOULD...
GODS OF K'AI! NEVER BEFORE HAVE I SEEN SUCH... SUCH REVEALING CLOTHING.
YEAH. I GUESS MY WORLD DOES HAVE SOME GOOD POINTS AT THAT.
AND RIGHT HERE WE HAVE ONE OF THE BEST!
YOU, MY FAIR-HAIRED BEAUTY, ARE ABOUT TO PARTAKE OF A CONFECTION THAT WOULD MAKE THOSE FABLED GODS OF YOURS DROOL!
ICE CREAM PARLOR
FLAVORS
WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN, BRUCE?
IN ALL THE TIME THAT I HAVE KNOWN YOU, BELOVED-- NEVER HAVE I SEEN YOU GLOW WITH SUCH ENTHUSIASM!
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'VE NEVER TASTED THE SINGLE MOST PRECIOUS TREASURE MY WORLD HAS TO OFFER!
JARELLA, I AM ABOUT TO INTRODUCE YOU TO-- TA-DAH-- THE TWO-TONE CHOCOLATE MILK SHAKE!
YOU CAN SAVE THE APPLAUSE TILL LATER.
IN ALL ACTUALITY, THEY'RE REALLY NOT SO UNUSUAL, THESE TWO STAR-CROSSED WAYFARERS ON THE CHURNING SEA OF LIFE. THEY'RE YOUNG, THEY'RE IN LOVE--
--AND IT SEEMS LOVE IS THE SAME NO MATTER WHERE YOU GO!

WHILE, IN A SHADOW-STREWN WAREHOUSE SOMEWHERE ON THE SEAMIER SIDE OF SANTA FE...
ALL MY LIFE, I'VE BEEN A NOTHING... A NOBODY...
...BUT IN A MATTER OF MOMENTS, THOSE DAYS WILL BE ENDED FOREVER--
--WITH THE HELP OF MY INHUMAN FRIEND!
EVER SINCE I FIRST FOUND JASPER WHYTE'S ALL-POWERFUL ANDROID, I'VE DEVOTED MYSELF TO RESTORING HIS REMARKABLE CREATION!
...A CREATURE WHO ONCE POSSESSED FULLY HALF THE INCOMPARABLE STRENGTH OF THE MIGHTY THOR HIMSELF! *
* CHECK OUT THOR #174 FOR ALL THE DRAMATIC DETAILS, PILGRIM. --LEN.
CLIK!
BUT NOW, THRU TRIAL AND ERROR AND UNSTINTING EFFORT, I HAVE ACTUALLY DOUBLED THE ANDROID'S POWER!
ALL I NEED DO IS ACTIVATE THE SPECIAL ENERGY-DYNAMO I CONSTRUCTED BASED ON WHYTE'S OWN DESIGNS--
--AND MY DAYS OF ANONYMITY WILL BE OVER!
FOR A TIMELESS INSTANT, THE MASSIVE FORM SPRAWLED UPON THE SOLITARY PLATFORM IS BATHED IN A PULSATING LIGHT THAT SEEMS TO SWALLOW THE ALL-ENCROACHING SHADOWS...
AND THEN, SUDDENLY...
I... POSSESS... POWER!
BY HEAVEN, I'VE DONE IT!
THE CRYPTO-MAN LIVES AGAIN!!

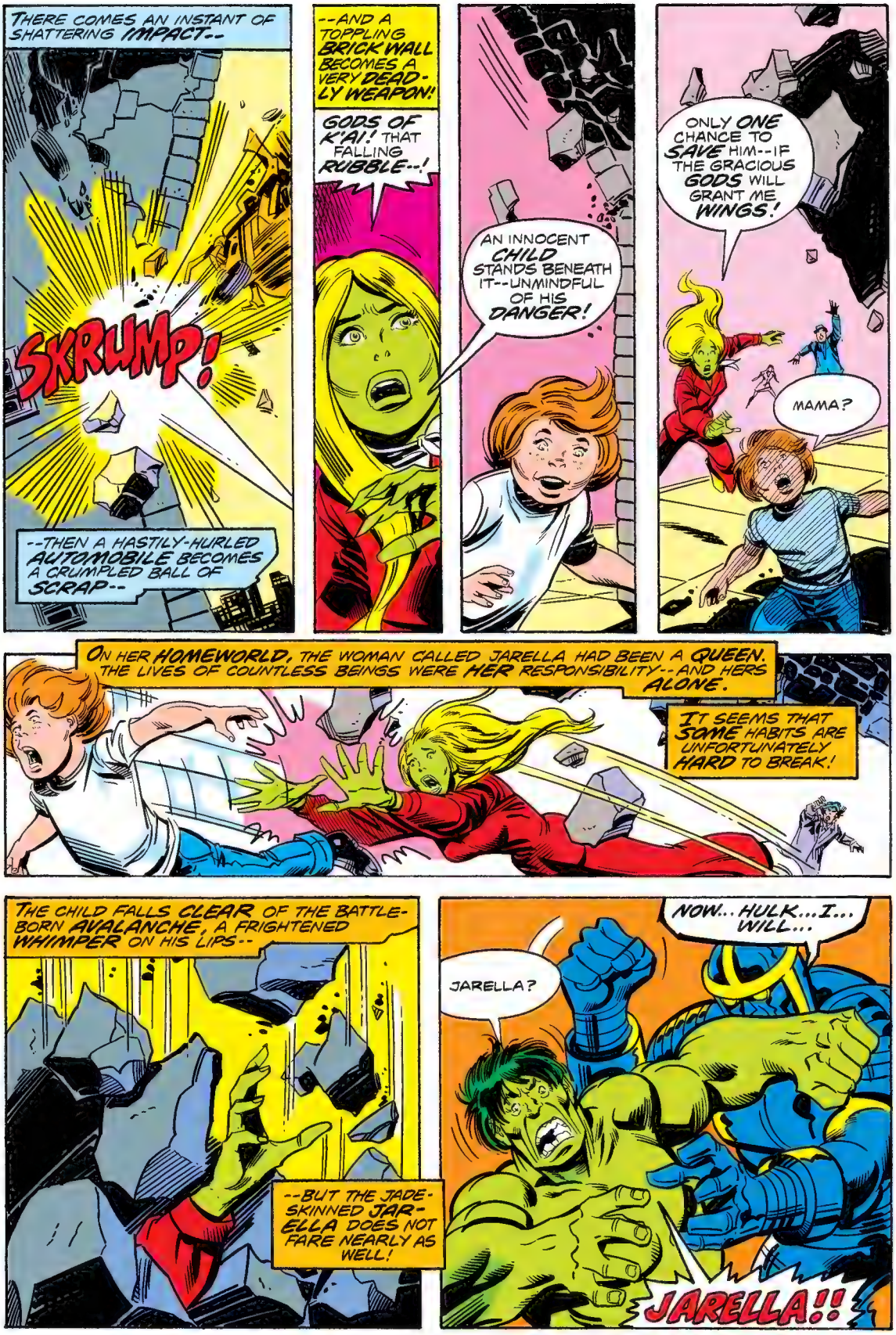

AND WHILE ONE LIFE (OF SORTS) BEGINS ANEW, SEVERAL HUNDRED MILES AWAY, AT THE SECLUDED PARA-MILITARY INSTALLATION CODE-NAMED GAMMA BASE, ANOTHER LIFE HAS GROUND TO A VIRTUAL STANDSTILL--
--SPECIFICALLY, THE MUCH-TORMENTED LIFE OF MAJOR GLENN TALBOT!
HE REALLY IS QUITE A FELLA, ISN'T HE?
I COULDN'T BLAME ANY WOMAN FOR FALLING FOR HIM--
--NOT EVEN BETTY!
I MEAN, LOOK AT HIM-- JUGGLING TWO-TON MACHINES AROUND LIKE THEY WERE THE PROVERBIAL TINKER-TOYS!
FACE IT, TALBOT-- DOC SAMSON IS ALL MAN!
AND WHAT ABOUT YOU, GLENN-- WHAT ARE YOU?
WHO--?!?
OH, BETTY. I DIDN'T HEAR YOU COMING, DARLING.
AND IF YOU HAD, GLENN? WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE THEN?
WOULD YOU HAVE PUT ON A HAPPY FACE AND PRETENDED EVERYTHING WAS ALL SWEETNESS AND LIGHT?
WOULD YOU REALLY HAVE LIED TO ME LIKE THAT, GLENN?
BUT IT'S FOR YOUR OWN GOOD, DARLING. DON'T YOU UNDER-STAND--?
WHEN I MARRIED YOU, I PROMISED TO TAKE YOU AWAY FROM ALL THE GRIEF YOU KNEW WHEN YOU LOVED BRUCE BANNER--
--BUT IT SEEMS ALL I'VE GIVEN YOU IS A WHOLE NEW KIND OF HEARTBREAK!
BETTY, I LOVE YOU. I JUST WANT TO SPARE YOU ANY MORE SORROW.
SPARE ME? SWEET LORD, GLENN-- I'M NOT SOME FRAGILE DRESDEN DOLL TO BE PROTECTED FOR FEAR SHE'LL BREAK!
I'M YOUR WIFE, GLENN...
... AND WHATEVER BRINGS YOU HAPPINESS... OR WHATEVER BRINGS YOU PAIN...
...I WANT TO SHARE!

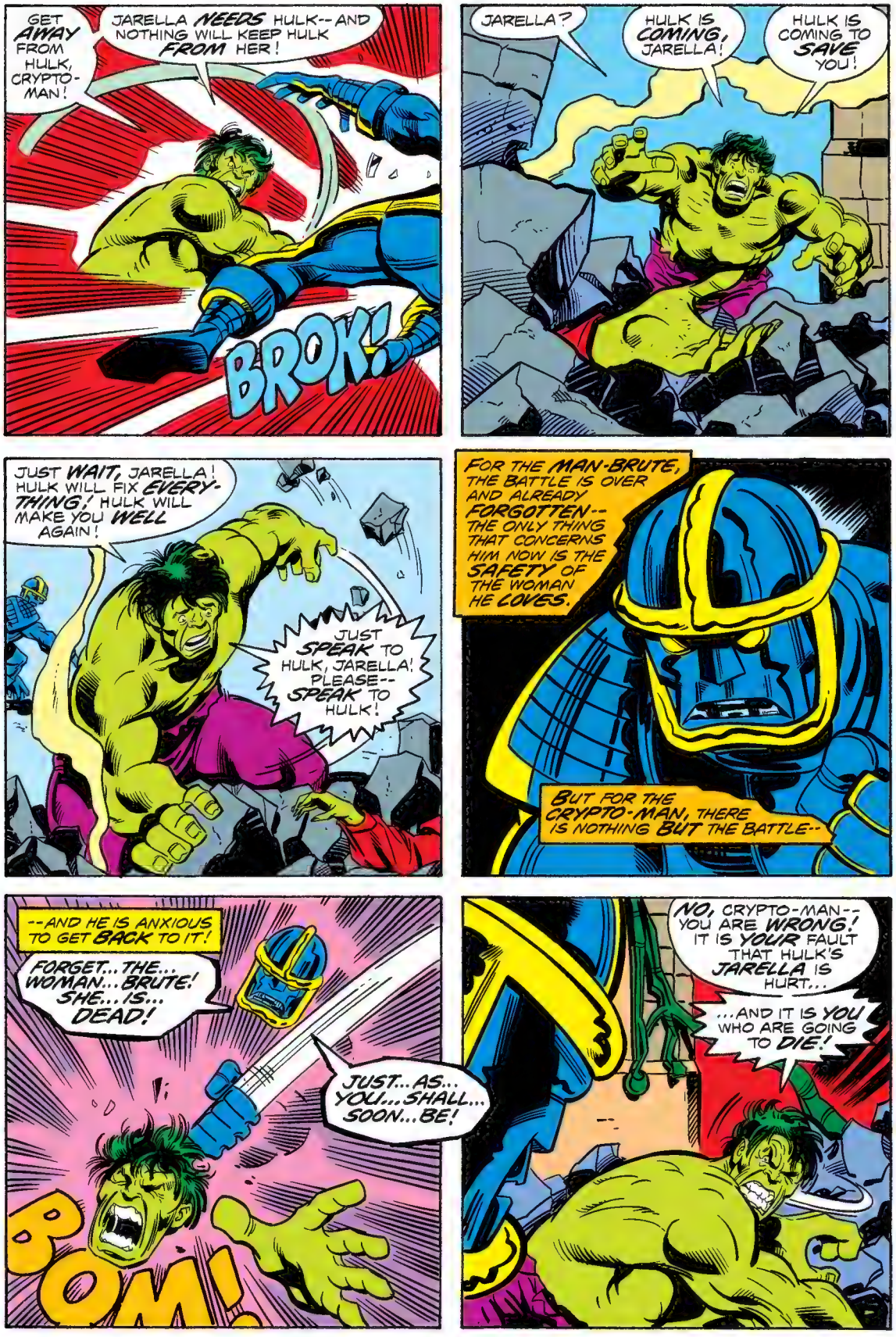
AND, BACK IN SANTA FE...
DID YOU SEE THE EXPRESSION ON THAT SALESWOMAN'S FACE WHEN SHE REALIZED YOU WEREN'T WEARING MAKE-UP?
I ADMIT IT WAS A TRIFLE DISCONCERTING AT FIRST, BELOVED--
--BUT I SUPPOSE IT CAN BECOME QUITE AMUSING AFTER AWHILE.
WHILE, SEVERAL BLOCKS AWAY...
STAND... ASIDE... HUMANS!
I...POSSESS... POWER!
SKRASHH!
BANK
MEXICO
HOLY CATFISH! IT'S SOME KIND 'A ROBOT!
WELL, WHATEVER IT IS--IT'S NOT COMING ANY CLOSER!
AT LEAST, NOT IN ONE PIECE!
BLAM! BLAM! SPOW!
KEEP FIRING! THESE HEAVY STEEL SLUGS AREN'T EVEN SLOWING HIM DOWN!
OUT...OF...MY... WAY...HUMANS!
SWAKK!
NOTHING... CAN...STOP... THE... CRYPTO-MAN!
I...POSSESS... POWER!
THE...POWER... TO...TAKE...WHAT... I...WANT!
SKROOOM!
SWEET HEAVEN! TH-THAT CREATURE HAS TORN THE VAULT DOOR RIGHT OFF ITS HINGES!

I'LL TELL YOU, HONEY-- I REALLY NEEDED THIS BREAK.
I KNOW, MY LOVE. SOMEHOW, GAMMA BASE SEEMS FAR MORE HECTIC THAN THIS GREAT CITY.
WANNA BET?
KROOM!
BY THE SEVEN-SIDED CIRCLE! WHAT MANNER OF CREATURE IS THIS?
SOME SORT OF ROBOT-- AND IT'S ON A RAMPAGE!
OUT...OF...MY...WAY...HUMANS...OR...DIE!
WHY, BLAST IT? WHY DOES TROUBLE FOLLOW ME WHEREVER I GO? WHY CAN'T I JUST BE LEFT IN PEACE?
CALM YOURSELF, BELOVED! THOSE IN AUTHORITY WILL DEAL WITH THE CREATURE!
CLEAR...THE...PATH...BEFORE...ME...HUMANS!
WRUNCH!
THE...CRYPTO-MAN...IS...POWER ...PERSONIFIED!
STAND...ASIDE...OR...I...WILL...CRUSH...YOU...ALL...CIKE...EH?
THAT...WOMAN! HER...SKIN...IS...GREEN...LIKE...THAT...OF...THE...MONSTROUS...HULK...WHO...PROWLS...THIS...REGION!
OH... NO.
AND IF HER STRENGTH IS ALSO LIKE THAT OF THE HULK, I MUST HAVE IT--
--TO SIPHON INTO MY CRYPTO-MAN!
"I NEED ONLY INITIATE THE PROPER PROGRAMMING AND.."
GET BEHIND ME, JARELLA! HE'S COMING AFTER YOU!

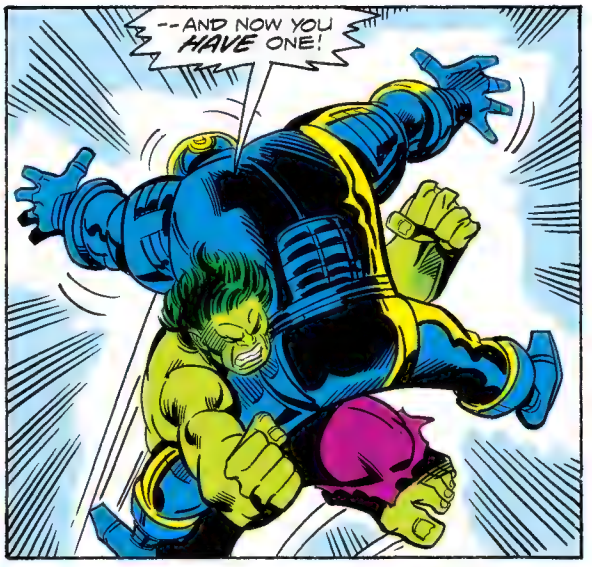
THERE IS NOWHERE FOR US TO RUN, BRUCE!
BUT WHATEVER HAPPENS NOW, MY LOVE-- I WILL FACE IT LIKE A QUEEN!
THE BLOOD OF ANCIENT ROYALTY FLOWS THRU MY VEINS AND I WILL NOT ALLOW MYSELF TO...
...TO...
NO! HE'S ALMOST UPON US!
HELP ME, BELOVED-- HELP ME!
DO NOT WORRY, JARELLA!
NOTHING WILL HURT YOU WHILE HULK IS HERE!
POW!
GODS OF K'AI!
INCREDIBLE! THE EMERALD MAN-BRUTE HIMSELF HAS SUDDENLY APPEARED UPON THE SCENE!
IF THE CRYPTO-MAN CAN DEFEAT HIM, MY REPUTATION IS ASSURED!
STAY BACK, ROBOT-- OR HULK WILL SMASH!
YOUR...THREATS...MEAN... NOTHING...TO...ME... MONSTER!
I...POSSESS... POWER!
BAH! HULK HAS POWER TOO, ROBOT-- POWER ENOUGH TO CRUSH YOU!

YOU... ARE... WELCOME... TO... COME... AHEAD... AND... TRY... BRUTE...
SKRAKK!
...BUT... NOTHING... THAT... LIVES... CAN... DEFY... THE... CRYPTO-MAN!
WHOM!
NOT... EVEN... YOU!
YOU ARE STRONG, CRYPTO-MAN-- BUT NOTHING CAN BEAT HULK!
THAT... REMAINS... TO... BE... SEEN!
JUST KEEP BACK OUT OF THEIR WAY, EVERYONE!
WE'LL HAVE TO LET THOSE TWO MONSTERS WORK THIS OUT BETWEEN THEMSELVES!
BUT NO MATTER WHICH ONE WINS-- THE CITY LOSES!
IT... IS... MY... DUTY... TO... DESTROY ... YOU... HULK...
...SO... THAT... THE... WHOLE... WORLD... CAN... KNOW... OF... MY... MASTER'S... BRILLIANCE!
HAH! HULK WAS TOO FAST FOR CRYPTO-MAN!
PUNY CAR FLEW OVER HULK'S HEAD!

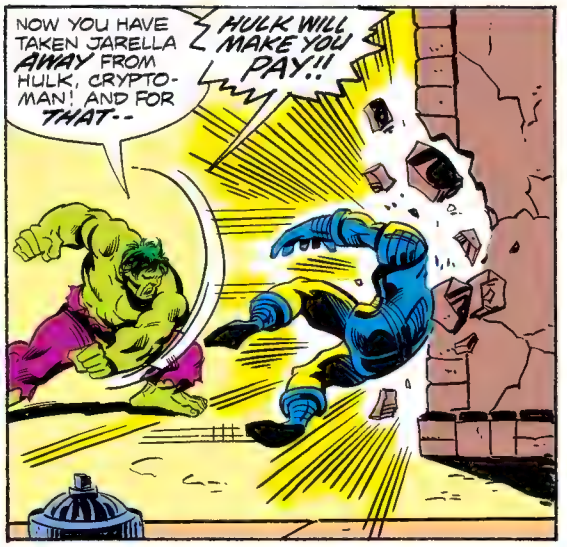

THERE COMES AN INSTANT OF SHATTERING IMPACT--
SKRUMP!
--THEN A HASTILY-HURLED AUTOMOBILE BECOMES A CRUMPLED BALL OF SCRAP--
--AND A TOPPLING BRICK WALL BECOMES A VERY DEADLY WEAPON!
GODS OF K'AI! THAT FALLING RUBBLE--!
AN INNOCENT CHILD STANDS BENEATH IT--UNMINDFUL OF HIS DANGER!
ONLY ONE CHANCE TO SAVE HIM--IF THE GRACIOUS GODS WILL GRANT ME WINGS!
MAMA?
ON HER HOMEWORLD, THE WOMAN CALLED JARELLA HAD BEEN A QUEEN. THE LIVES OF COUNTLESS BEINGS WERE HER RESPONSIBILITY--AND HERS ALONE.
IT SEEMS THAT SOME HABITS ARE UNFORTUNATELY HARD TO BREAK!
THE CHILD FALLS CLEAR OF THE BATTLE-BORN AVALANCHE, A FRIGHTENED WHIMPER ON HIS LIPS--
--BUT THE JADE-SKINNED JARELLA DOES NOT FARE NEARLY AS WELL!
JARELLA?
NOW... HULK... I... WILL...
JARELLA!!

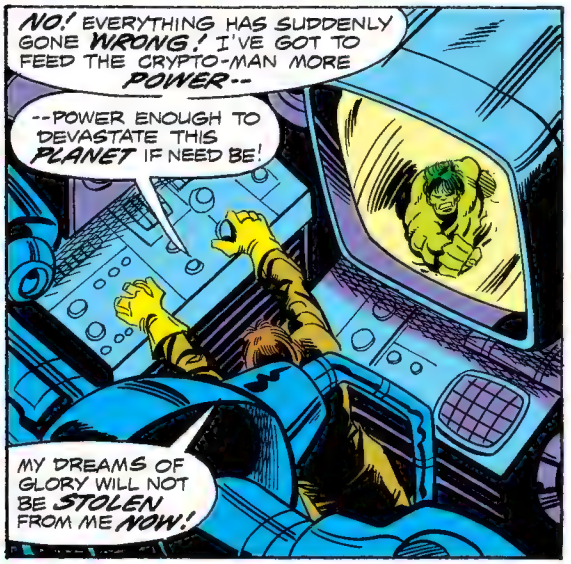

GET AWAY FROM HULK, CRYPTO-MAN!
JARELLA NEEDS HULK--AND NOTHING WILL KEEP HULK FROM HER!
BROK!
JARELLA?
HULK IS COMING, JARELLA!
HULK IS COMING TO SAVE YOU!
JUST WAIT, JARELLA! HULK WILL FIX EVERY-THING! HULK WILL MAKE YOU WELL AGAIN!
JUST SPEAK TO HULK, JARELLA! PLEASE--SPEAK TO HULK!
FOR THE MAN-BRUTE, THE BATTLE IS OVER AND ALREADY FORGOTTEN--THE ONLY THING THAT CONCERNS HIM NOW IS THE SAFETY OF THE WOMAN HE LOVES.
BUT FOR THE CRYPTO-MAN, THERE IS NOTHING BUT THE BATTLE--
--AND HE IS ANXIOUS TO GET BACK TO IT!
FORGET...THE...WOMAN...BRUTE! SHE...IS...DEAD!
JUST...AS...YOU...SHALL...SOON...BE!
BOM!
NO, CRYPTO-MAN--YOU ARE WRONG! IT IS YOUR FAULT THAT HULK'S JARELLA IS HURT...
...AND IT IS YOU WHO ARE GOING TO DIE!

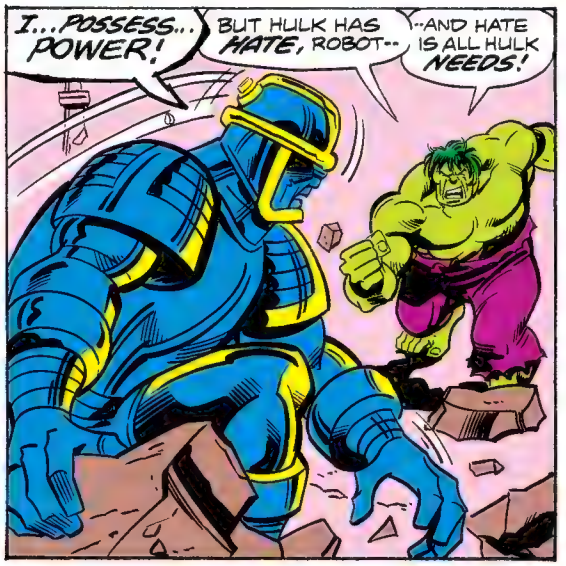
DEAR HEAVEN! THAT FACE--!
IT'S THE LIVING EMBODIMENT OF SHEER, UNADULTERATED HATRED!
YOU WANTED A FIGHT, CRYPTO-MAN--

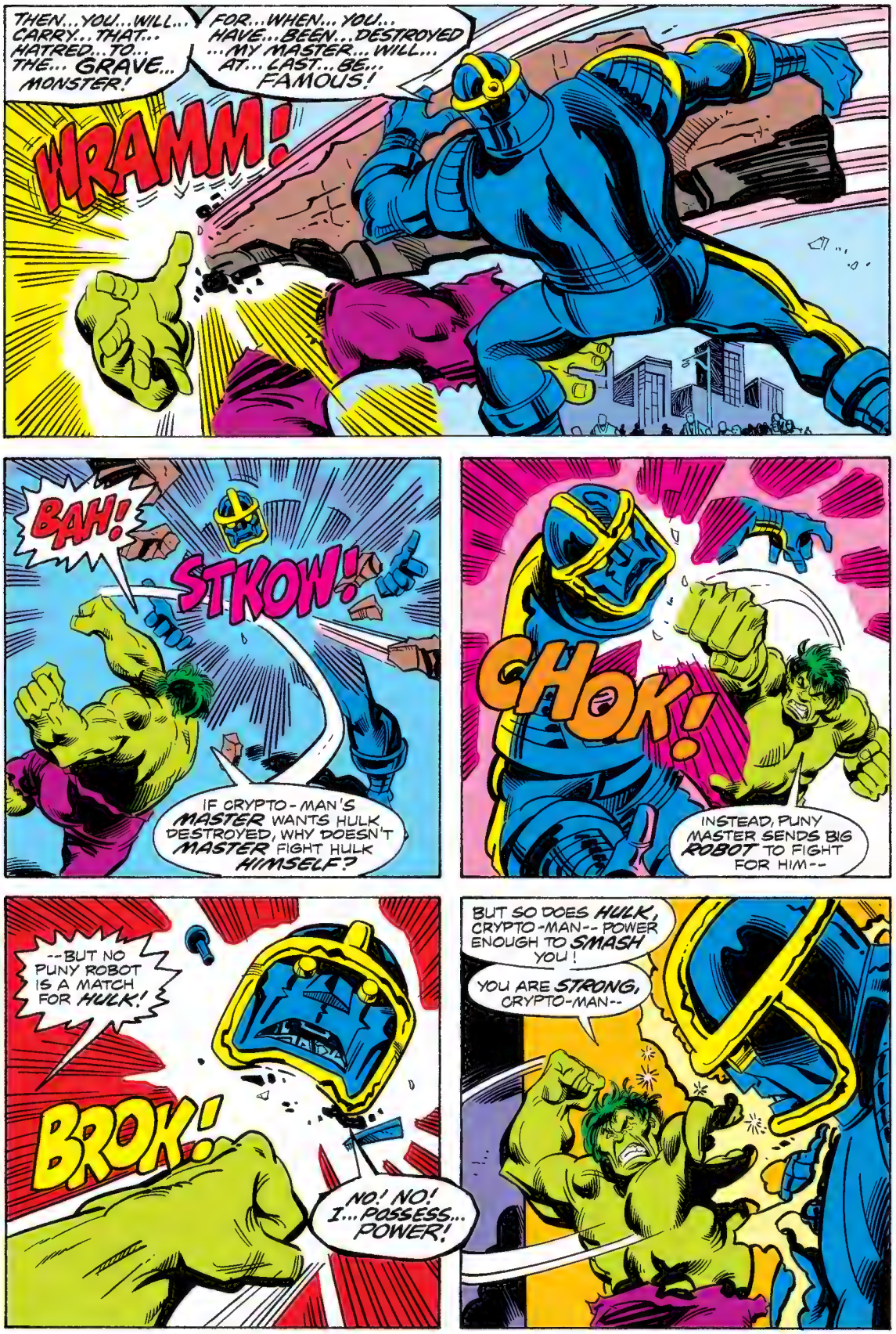

--AND NOW YOU HAVE ONE!

FOR ALL HULK'S LIFE, HULK HAS BEEN ALONE!
BUT THEN HULK FOUND JARELLA-- AND HULK WAS HAPPY FOR THE FIRST TIME!


NOW YOU HAVE TAKEN JARELLA AWAY FROM HULK, CRYPTO-MAN! AND FOR THAT--
HULK WILL MAKE YOU PAY!!


NO! EVERYTHING HAS SUDDENLY GONE WRONG! I'VE GOT TO FEED THE CRYPTO-MAN MORE POWER--
--POWER ENOUGH TO DEVASTATE THIS PLANET IF NEED BE!
MY DREAMS OF GLORY WILL NOT BE STOLEN FROM ME NOW!


I... POSSESS... POWER!
BUT HULK HAS HATE, ROBOT--
--AND HATE IS ALL HULK NEEDS!

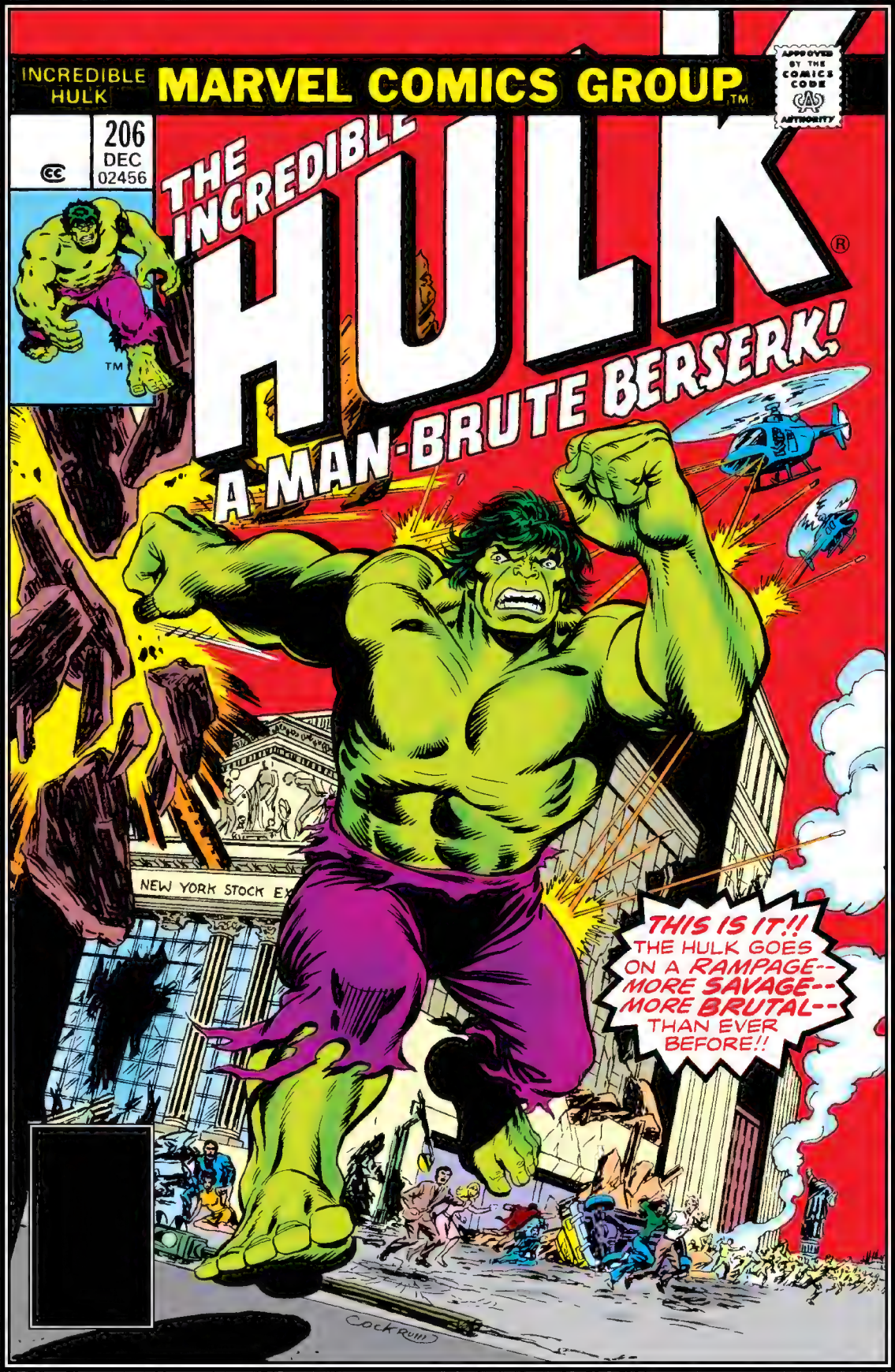

THEN...YOU...WILL... CARRY...THAT... HATRED...TO... THE... GRAVE... MONSTER!
FOR...WHEN... YOU... HAVE...BEEN...DESTROYED ...MY MASTER... WILL... AT... LAST...BE... FAMOUS!
WRAMM!
BAH!
STKOW!
IF CRYPTO-MAN'S MASTER WANTS HULK DESTROYED, WHY DOESN'T MASTER FIGHT HULK HIMSELF?
CHOK!
INSTEAD, PUNY MASTER SENDS BIG ROBOT TO FIGHT FOR HIM--
--BUT NO PUNY ROBOT IS A MATCH FOR HULK!
BROK!
NO! NO! I... POSSESS... POWER!
BUT SO DOES HULK, CRYPTO-MAN-- POWER ENOUGH TO SMASH YOU!
YOU ARE STRONG, CRYPTO-MAN--

KHA-DOOMM!
--BUT HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!!
NO! IT'S NOT POSSIBLE--!
DESPITE THE INCALCULABLE AMOUNT OF POWER I TRANSMITTED TO HIM, MY CRYPTO-MAN HAS BEEN DESTROYED!
ZAKK!

AND NOW THE INCREDIBLE POWER-FEED-BACK IS DESTROYING MY EQUIPMENT AS WELL!
I'VE GOT TO BREAK THE CIRCUITS BEFORE...
BUT IT IS ALREADY FAR TOO LATE!
AND THE BLAST THAT STEALS HIS LIFE AWAY IS TRULY TERRIBLE TO HEAR!
OUTSIDE, A PASSERBY WHO WAS STARTLED BY THE EXPLOSION EVEN NOW IS CALLING THE POLICE.
THE RUINED BODY THEY FIND HERE WILL BE BURIED AT THE CITY'S EXPENSE; ITS IDENTITY WILL NEVER BE KNOWN--
--AND SOMEWHERE, A TORTURED SOUL WILL SCREAM FOR ALL ETERNITY!
BUT, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, THAT IS A VERY SPECIAL KIND OF JUSTICE!
JARELLA?
PLEASE, JARELLA--TELL HULK HOW TO MAKE YOU WELL AGAIN!
JUST... HOLD ME... BELOVED.
BUT...
MAYBE IT IS... BETTER THIS WAY, MY LOVE. I WAS NOT A... PART OF YOUR WORLD... I DID NOT BELONG HERE...
...BUT YOU MADE MY TIME HERE... A HAPPY ONE...
PLEASE... BE KIND TO YOURSELF... MY DARLING... UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN...
JARELLA?
DON'T LEAVE, JARELLA!
PLEASE... DON'T LEAVE HULK ALONE AGAIN.
NO... SHE DOES NOT ANSWER...
...BUT HULK WILL NOT LET JARELLA DIE!
SOMEWHERE...
SOMEHOW...
...HULK WILL FIND SOMEONE TO HELP HER!

AIMLESSLY, THE MAN-BRUTE BOUNDS ABOUT THE COUNTRYSIDE, UNTIL HE FINALLY STUMBLES UPON...
GAMMA BASE! THE ONE CALLED ROSS LIVES HERE!
ROSS WILL USE HIS BIG MACHINES TO MAKE JARELLA WELL AGAIN--
--OR HULK WILL SMASH!
ROSS! JARELLA IS HURT! HULK WANTS YOU TO FIX HER!
JUMPING JUPITER!
LORD, I WAS AFRAID OF SOMETHING LIKE THIS!
GENERAL, YOU'D BETTER GET YOUR TOP MEDICS UP HERE-- AND PRONTO!
IF THERE'S A SPARK OF LIFE STILL LEFT IN THIS GIRL, IT'S FADING FAST!
YOU'VE DONE ALL YOU CAN, HULK. WE'LL HANDLE THINGS FROM HERE ON!
JUST MAKE JARELLA WELL AGAIN, SAMSON...
...PLEASE.
PLEASE.
IT IS SEVERAL ETERNITIES LATER, WHEN THE DOORS OF THE OPERATING THEATRE HUSH OPEN ONCE MORE.
HOW IS JARELLA, SAMSON? IS SHE...?
I'M SORRY, HULK. WE WERE TOO LATE.
THERE WAS NOTHING WE COULD DO FOR HER.
EMERGENCY
HUH?
JARELLA IS... DEAD?
DEAD?

NO! NOOO!!
IT CANNOT BE TRUE!
IT MUST NOT BE TRUE!
WHY ARE YOU LYING TO HULK, SAMSON-- WHY??
TELL HULK THE TRUTH-- OR HULK WILL SMASH YOUR GAMMA BASE TO PIECES!!
NO, HULK-- STOP! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING!
IN HEAVEN'S NAME, BETTY-- COME BACK HERE!
PLEASE, HULK-- LISTEN TO ME! NOBODY IS LYING TO YOU!
BETTY?
YES, HULK, IT'S BETTY--YOUR FRIEND --AND YOU MUST BELIEVE WHAT I SAY!
SAMSON AND THE OTHERS TRIED EVERY-THING POSSIBLE TO SAVE YOUR JARELLA--
--BUT THERE WAS NOTHING MORE THAT SCIENCE COULD DO FOR HER!
BAH! IF SCIENCE CANNOT HELP JARELLA, THEN MAYBE MAGIC CAN!
HULK WILL GO FIND MAGICIAN WHO IS HULK'S FRIEND--
--AND THEN HULK WILL BE BACK!
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT HE MEANT BY THAT, GENERAL?
NOT THE SLIGHTEST, SAMSON--
--BUT I HAVE THE UNCOMFORT-ABLE FEELING THAT WE'RE GOING TO FIND OUT!
NEXT ISSUE:
THE HULK HITS NEW YORK--AND, BOY, DO WE MEAN HITS! BE HERE TO WITNESS THE MOST SAVAGE HULK OF ALL IN...
A MAN-BRUTE BERSERK!

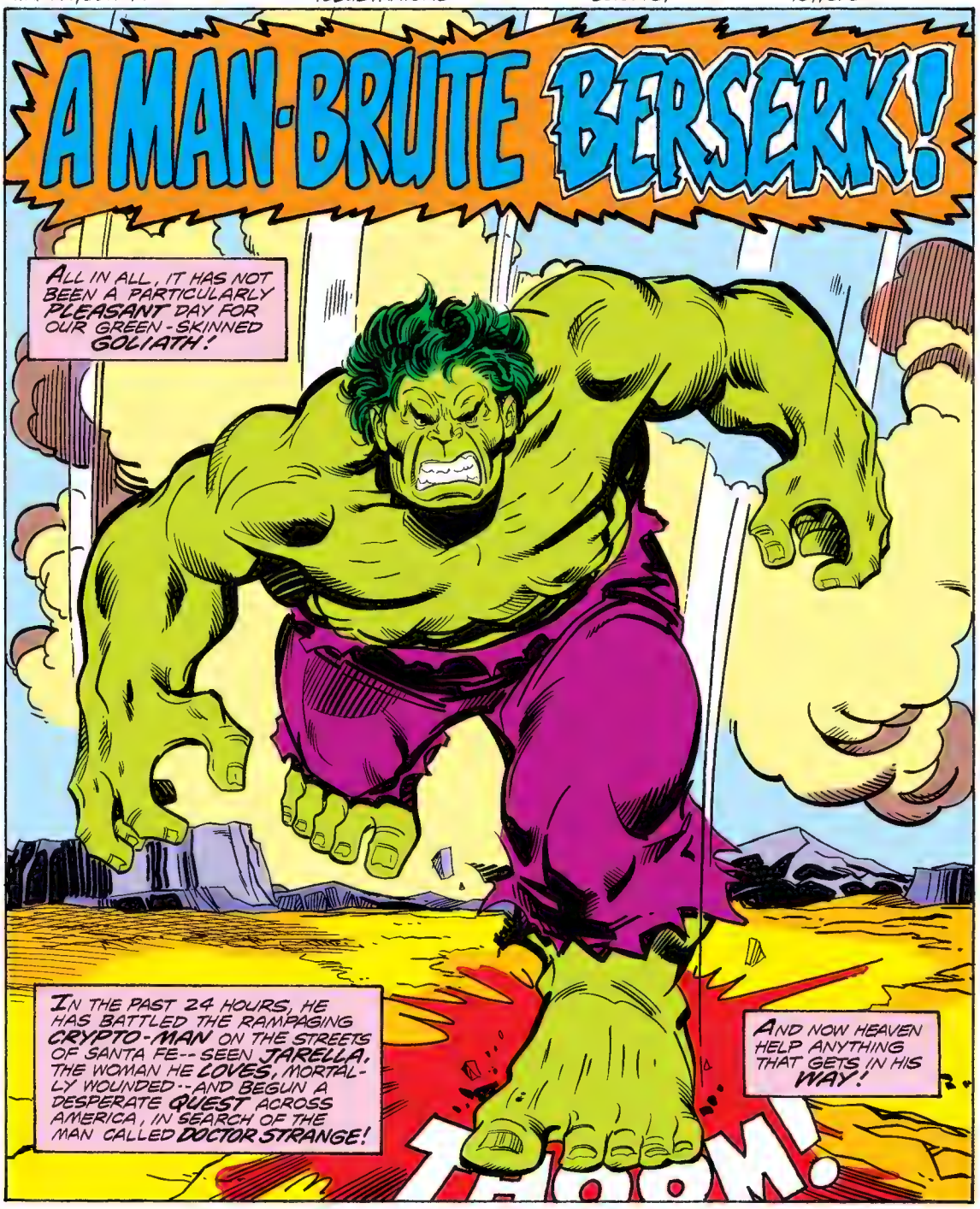

INCREDIBLE HULK
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
206
DEC
02456
THE INCREDIBLE HULK®
A MAN-BRUTE BERSERK!
NEW YORK STOCK EX
THIS IS IT!!
THE HULK GOES ON A RAMPAGE--
MORE SAVAGE--
MORE BRUTAL--
THAN EVER BEFORE!!
COCKRUM

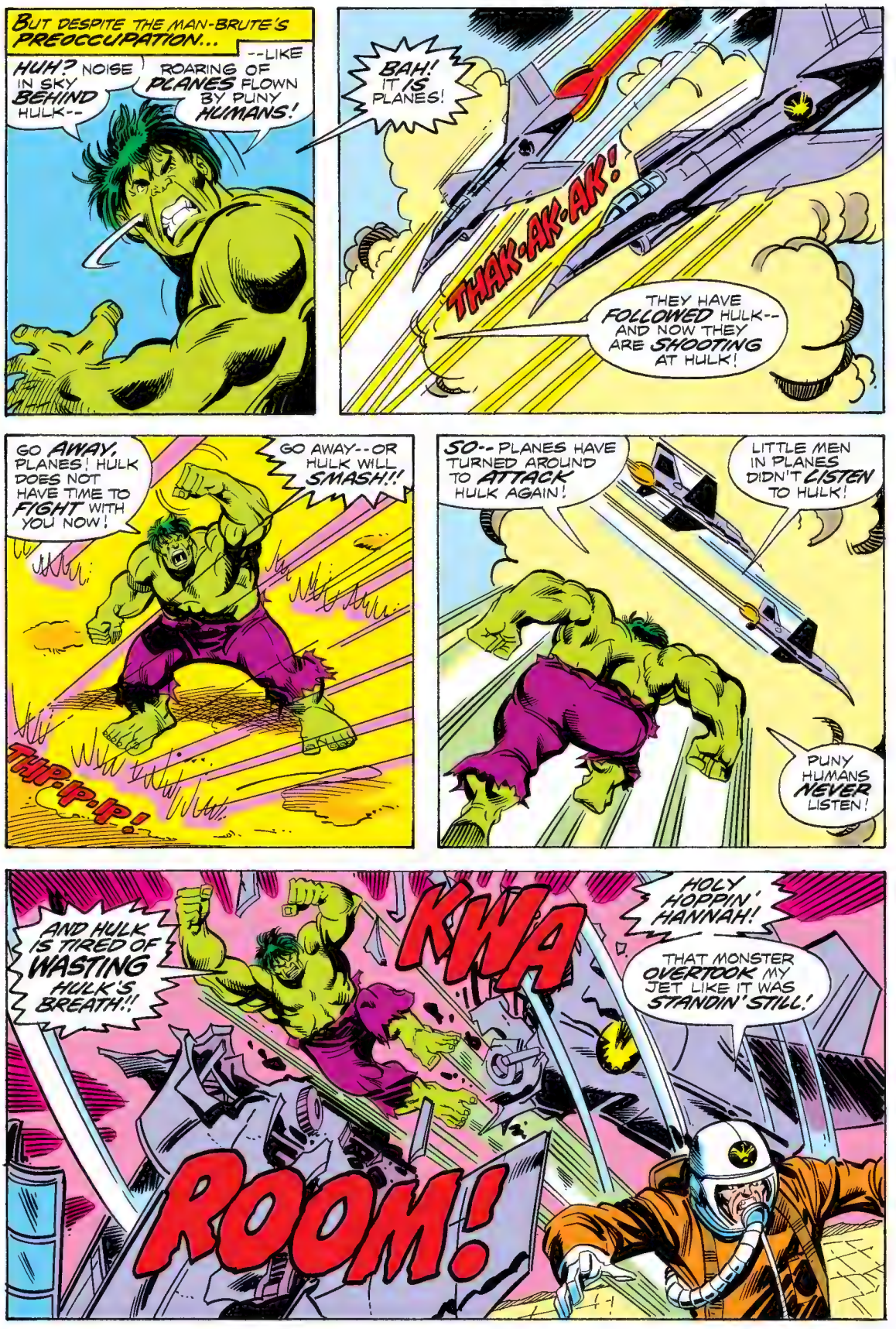
Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

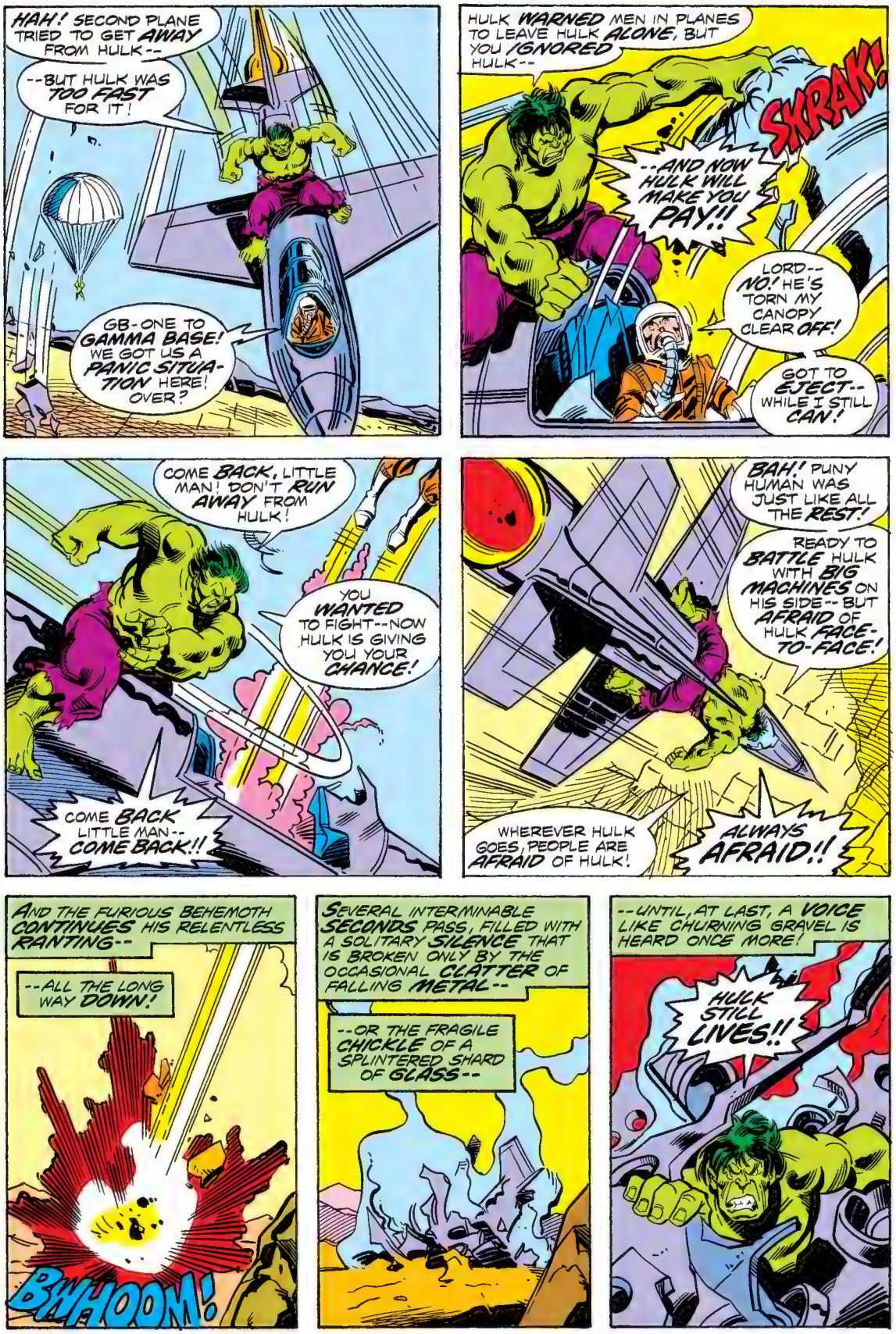
Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!™

LEN WEIN WRITER/EDITOR * SAL BUSCEMA & JOE STATON ILLUSTRATORS * GLYNIS WEIN colorist * JOHN COSTANZA letterer

A MAN-BRUTE BERSERK!

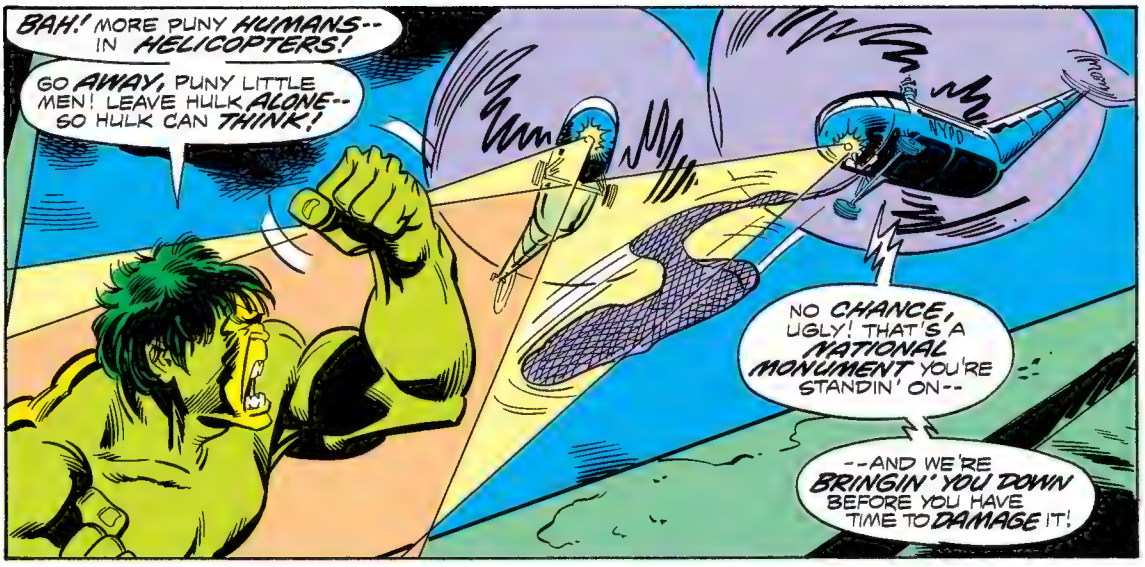

ALL IN ALL, IT HAS NOT BEEN A PARTICULARLY PLEASANT DAY FOR OUR GREEN-SKINNED GOLIATH!
IN THE PAST 24 HOURS, HE HAS BATTLED THE RAMPAGING CRYPTO-MAN ON THE STREETS OF SANTA FE--SEEN JARELLA, THE WOMAN HE LOVES, MORTALLY WOUNDED--AND BEGUN A DESPERATE QUEST ACROSS AMERICA, IN SEARCH OF THE MAN CALLED DOCTOR STRANGE!
AND NOW HEAVEN HELP ANYTHING THAT GETS IN HIS WAY!
THOOM!

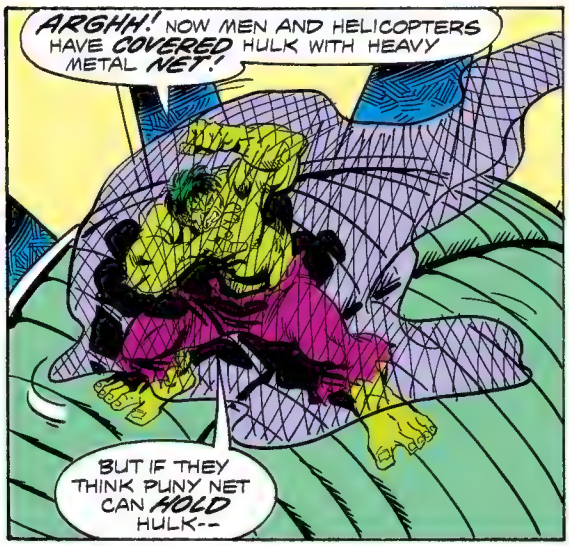

BUT DESPITE THE MAN-BRUTE'S PREOCCUPATION...
HUH? NOISE IN SKY BEHIND HULK--
--LIKE ROARING OF PLANES FLOWN BY PUNY HUMANS!
BAH! IT IS PLANES!
THAK-AK-AK!
THEY HAVE FOLLOWED HULK-- AND NOW THEY ARE SHOOTING AT HULK!
GO AWAY, PLANES! HULK DOES NOT HAVE TIME TO FIGHT WITH YOU NOW!
GO AWAY--OR HULK WILL SMASH!!
THUP-P-P!
SO-- PLANES HAVE TURNED AROUND TO ATTACK HULK AGAIN!
LITTLE MEN IN PLANES DIDN'T LISTEN TO HULK!
PUNY HUMANS NEVER LISTEN!
AND HULK IS TIRED OF WASTING HULK'S BREATH!!
KWA
ROOM!
HOLY HOPPIN' HANNAH!
THAT MONSTER OVERTOOK MY JET LIKE IT WAS STANDIN' STILL!


HAH! SECOND PLANE TRIED TO GET AWAY FROM HULK--
--BUT HULK WAS TOO FAST FOR IT!
GB-ONE TO GAMMA BASE! WE GOT US A PANIC SITUATION HERE! OVER?
HULK WARNED MEN IN PLANES TO LEAVE HULK ALONE, BUT YOU IGNORED HULK--
SKRAK!
--AND NOW HULK WILL MAKE YOU PAY!!
LORD--NO! HE'S TORN MY CANOPY CLEAR OFF!
GOT TO EJECT--WHILE I STILL CAN!
COME BACK, LITTLE MAN! DON'T RUN AWAY FROM HULK!
YOU WANTED TO FIGHT--NOW HULK IS GIVING YOU YOUR CHANCE!
COME BACK LITTLE MAN--COME BACK!!
BAH! PUNY HUMAN WAS JUST LIKE ALL THE REST!
READY TO BATTLE HULK WITH BIG MACHINES ON HIS SIDE--BUT AFRAID OF HULK FACE-TO-FACE!
WHEREVER HULK GOES, PEOPLE ARE AFRAID OF HULK!
ALWAYS AFRAID!!
AND THE FURIOUS BEHEMOTH CONTINUES HIS RELENTLESS RANTING--
--ALL THE LONG WAY DOWN!
BWHOOM!
SEVERAL INTERMINABLE SECONDS PASS, FILLED WITH A SOLITARY SILENCE THAT IS BROKEN ONLY BY THE OCCASIONAL CLATTER OF FALLING METAL--
--OR THE FRAGILE CHICKLE OF A SPLINTERED SHARD OF GLASS--
--UNTIL, AT LAST, A VOICE LIKE CHURNING GRAVEL IS HEARD ONCE MORE!
HULK STILL LIVES!!

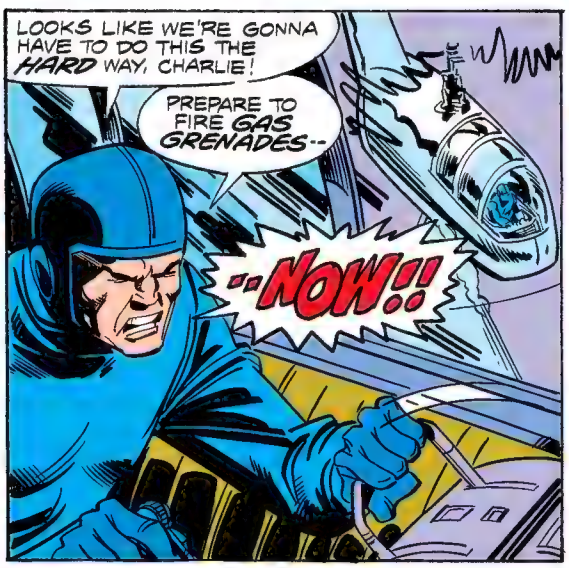
YOU TRIED, LITTLE MEN--
--BUT NOTHING CAN KILL HULK!
NOTHING!!
IF HULK HAD TIME, HULK WOULD STAY AND SMASH YOU BOTH--
--BUT NOW HULK HAS MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO!
GB-TWO TO GAMMA BASE! DAMAGE REPORT, SIR--BOTH PLANES DESTROYED!
WE DID OUR BEST, GENERAL--
--BUT I'M AFRAID THE HULK STILL GOT AWAY!
YOU DID ALL YOU COULD DO, GB-TWO!
WE'LL DISPATCH A RETRIEVAL-CRAFT IMMEDIATELY TO PICK YOU BOTH UP!
AND THEN WHAT, GENERAL ROSS?
WILL YOU SEND OUT ANOTHER TEAM TO CAPTURE THE HULK? WILL YOU SEND OUT A THOUSAND OTHER TEAMS?
AND AFTER THEY CAPTURE HIM, WHAT THEN? WHAT HAPPENS WHEN HE ESCAPES ONCE MORE?
HOW MANY TIMES MUST THIS CAT-AND-MOUSE GAME BE REPLAYED BEFORE YOU'RE THRU?
WHAT ARE YOU JABBERING ABOUT, SAMSON? I'M ONLY DOING MY JOB!
I'VE BEEN AROUND HERE LONG ENOUGH TO KNOW THIS IS NO LONGER MERELY A JOB TO YOU, GENERAL--
--IT'S AN OBSESSION!
WHY DON'T YOU LEAVE BRUCE BANNER ALONE FOR A WHILE? LET HIM WORK OUT THIS HULK PROBLEM FOR HIMSELF?
LORD KNOWS HE HAS ENOUGH ON HIS SHOULDERS WITHOUT US ADDING TO HIS GRIEF!
BUT I... I...
NO, MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT, SAMSON--MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT!
I JUST WISH TO GOD I KNEW FOR SURE!

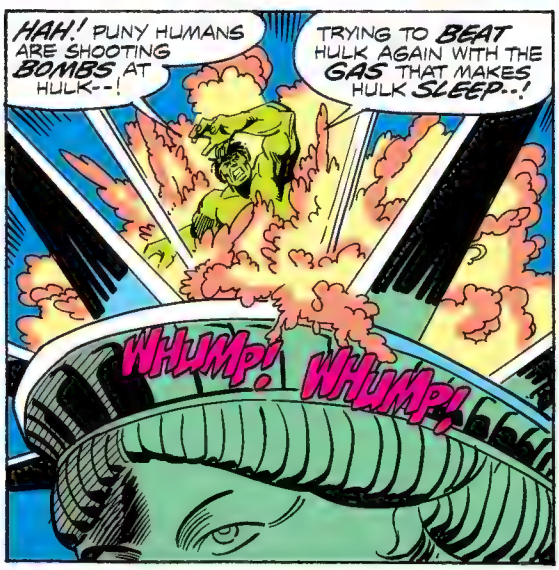
SEVERAL HOURS--AND SEVERAL HUNDRED MONUMENTAL LEAPS--HAVE FINALLY CARRIED THE ANGRY HULK TO THE MARSHY NEW JERSEY SHORE...
HUH?
...WITHIN CLEAR VIEW OF A VERY SPECIAL LADY!
IS STATUE!
HULK REMEMBERS STATUE!
HULK SPENT TIME HERE ONCE BEFORE! *
* BACK IN HULK #142, LIBERTY-LOVERS. --LEN.
AND RIGHT NOW, STATUE IS JUST WHAT HULK NEEDS!
STATUE IS HIGH! IT OVERLOOKS BIG CITY!
MAYBE FROM HERE, HULK CAN SEE HOUSE OF HULK'S FRIEND--
--HOUSE OF THE MAGICIAN CALLED STRANGE!
HULK NEEDS MAGICIAN'S HELP IF JARELLA IS GOING TO BE WELL AGAIN-- AND JARELLA MUST BE WELL!
JARELLA IS THE ONLY ONE WHO EVER CARED FOR HULK... WHO EVER LOVED HULK FOR WHAT HULK IS!
HULK NEEDS JARELLA TO HELP HULK UNDERSTAND WHAT...
HUH?
LIGHTS FROM SKY--PINNING HULK TO SPOTLIGHT--!
WHO DARES TO BOTHER HULK NOW?


BAH! MORE PUNY HUMANS-- IN HELICOPTERS!
GO AWAY, PUNY LITTLE MEN! LEAVE HULK ALONE-- SO HULK CAN THINK!
NO CHANCE, UGLY! THAT'S A NATIONAL MONUMENT YOU'RE STANDIN' ON--
--AND WE'RE BRINGIN' YOU DOWN BEFORE YOU HAVE TIME TO DAMAGE IT!


ARGHH! NOW MEN AND HELICOPTERS HAVE COVERED HULK WITH HEAVY METAL NET!
BUT IF THEY THINK PUNY NET CAN HOLD HULK--

--THEY ARE WRONG!!
SKRAK!


LOOKS LIKE WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO DO THIS THE HARD WAY, CHARLIE!
PREPARE TO FIRE GAS GRENADES--
--NOW!!

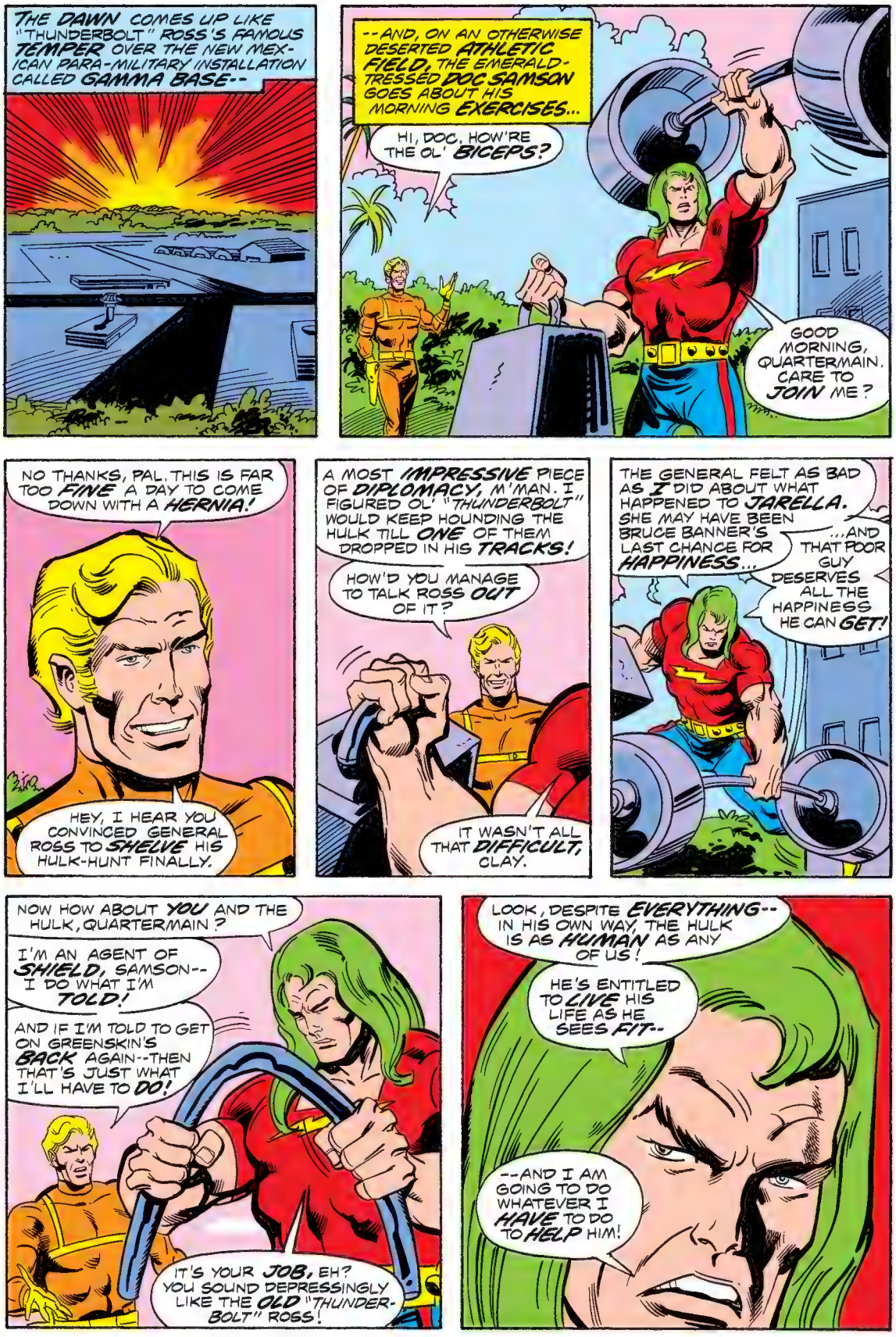

HAH! PUNY HUMANS ARE SHOOTING BOMBS AT HULK--!
TRYING TO BEAT HULK AGAIN WITH THE GAS THAT MAKES HULK SLEEP--!
WHUMP!
WHUMP!

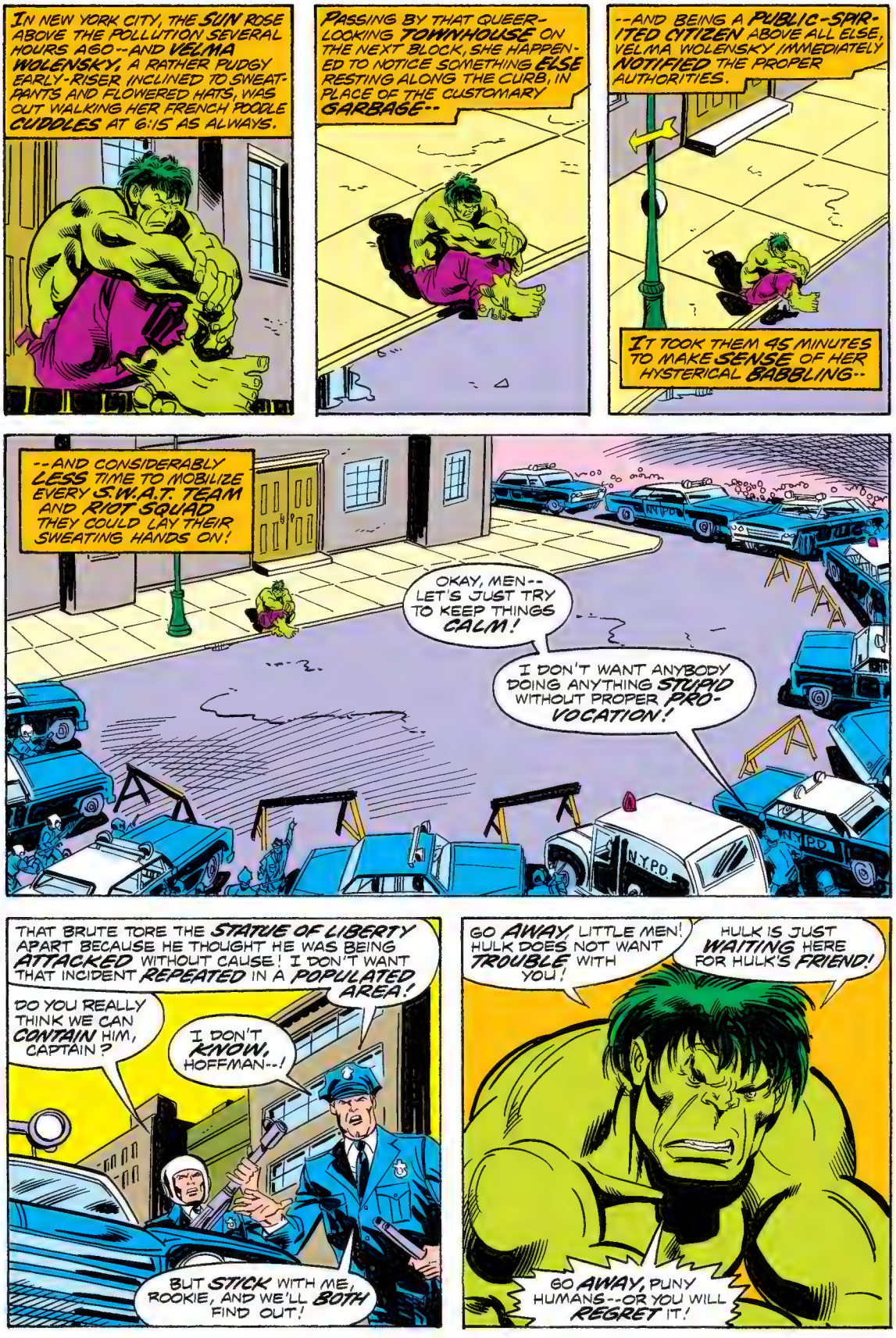
BUT THIS TIME, HULK IS TOO SMART FOR THEM!
THIS TIME, HULK WILL USE ARMS TO BLOW GAS AWAY!
WITHIN INSTANTS, THE NOXIOUS FUMES ARE GONE-- BUT THE MAN-BRUTE'S RAGE IS STILL GOING STRONG!
HULK ONLY WANTED TO BE LEFT ALONE-- TO FIND MAGICIAN'S HOUSE IN PEACE--
--BUT PUNY HUMANS KEEP ON HOUNDING HULK--
RRUNCH!
--AND HULK IS SICK AND TIRED OF IT!!
KWHAMM!
SWEET HEAVEN-- NO!!
FOR THE LAST TIME, LITTLE MEN-- STAY AWAY FROM HULK!
OR HULK WILL CRUSH YOU ALL LIKE BUGS!
MOTHER MERCY! THAT MONSTER'S HEADING STRAIGHT FOR MANHATTAN!
WE'VE GOTTA DO SOMETHING TO STOP HIM!
IF YOU'VE GOT ANY SUGGESTIONS, CHARLIE--I'D BE HAPPY TO HEAR 'EM!

BUT EVEN AS CHARLIE SHRUGS HIS SHOULDERS HELPLESSLY AND THE TWO THOROUGHLY-SOAKED FIGURES MOROSELY STROKE TOWARDS SHORE...
BAH! HOW WILL HULK FIND MAGICIAN'S HOUSE NOW?
HEY!?! WH-WHUT'S GOIN' ON?
THOOM!
THIS AN EART'QUAKE OR SOMETHIN'?
OH... HIYA, PAL. D-DIDN'T SEE YA STANDIN' THERE!
CARE TA JOIN ME IN A LI'L DRINKY-POO?
IT'SA FINEST HOOCH 85 CENTS KIN BUY.
HUH? LITTLE MAN IN DIRTY CLOTHES OFFERS HULK A DRINK?
HULK DOESN'T TRUST PUNY HUMANS...
...BUT HULK IS... THIRSTY...
YES, LITTLE MAN-- HULK WILL TAKE A DRINK!
AND THEN HULK WILL...
PFAUGH!!
SO! HULK WAS RIGHT NOT TO TRUST LITTLE MAN!
PUNY HUMAN TRIED TO POISON HULK--
--AND FOR THAT, HULK WILL SMASH!!
HEY, NO-- DON'T--!
KKRRIPP
LEMME OUTTA HERE! EVER'BODY IN THIS WHOLE BLAMED TOWN IS CRAZY!
BAH! CLOTHES ARE SO RAG-GED, LITTLE MAN GOT AWAY FROM HULK!
LITTLE MAN HAS RUN AWAY-- BUT HULK'S ANGER STILL REMAINS!
WHY DO PUNY HUMANS TRY TO TRICK HULK--TRY TO HURT HULK-- WHEREVER HULK GOES?
WHY?
WHY??
WHY??

WHY??
WH-WHAT--?!?
OH,,,TH-THANK GOD. IT WAS A DREAM-- ONLY A DREAM!
IT SOUNDED MORE LIKE A NIGHT-MARE, GLENN DARLING.
WHAT FRIGHTENED YOU SO?
I--I WAS BACK IN RUSSIA, BETTY--A PRISONER OF THAT LITTLE MONSTER CALLED THE GREMLIN...
...AND HE WAS ABOUT TO DESTROY MY MIND AGAIN! *
LORD, MY SPINE TURNS TO ICE JUST THINKING ABOUT IT!
*AS HE DID BACK IN HULK #188--LEN.
I'M SORRY I WOKE YOU UP TOO, BETTY. GO BACK TO SLEEP.
AND LEAVE YOU TIED UP IN KNOTS LIKE THIS?
YOU SHOULD KNOW ME BETTER THAN THAT, GLENN. WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP YOU?
I WISH I KNEW, BETTY.
HONEST TO GOD, I WISH I KNEW.
GLENN, PLEASE--NO MAN CAN GO THROUGH WHAT YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH WITHOUT SUFFERING SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL SCARS!
BUT YOU'VE GOT TO UN-WIND, DARLING--TRY TO FORGET!
DON'T LET THE PAST DESTROY OUR FUTURE TOGETHER.
THAT'S JUST WHAT WORRIES ME, BETTY...
DO WE EVEN HAVE A FUTURE TOGETHER?
IN HER OWN FASHION, BETTY ROSS TALBOT ECHOES HER HUSBAND'S THOUGHTS.
AND THUS THEY PASS THE NIGHT IN SILENT SOLITUDE; TWO PEOPLE BOUND TOGETHER BY THE HOLY STATE OF MATRIMONY--
--AND VERY LITTLE ELSE!

FOR SEVERAL HOURS, THE GREEN GOLIATH HAS WANDERED AIMLESSLY THRU THE SHADOW-STREWN ALLEYWAYS OF MANHATTAN, IN SEARCH OF A MOST UNIQUE EDIFICE...
HAH! AT LAST!
...THE GREENWICH VILLAGE SANCTUM SANCTORUM OF THE MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS!
HULK HAS FOUND MAGICIAN'S HOUSE!
NOW MAGICIAN WILL HELP HULK MAKE JARELLA WELL AGAIN, AND THEN...
HUH?
THERE IS SOMETHING IN AIR IN FRONT OF HULK--SOMETHING THAT HULK CANNOT SEE!
IT FEELS LIKE WALL--WALL THAT WILL NOT LET HULK COME CLOSE TO MAGICIAN'S HOUSE!
BUT NOTHING WILL STOP HULK FROM REACHING HULK'S FRIEND!
NOTHING!
HULK WILL SMASH THIS WALL HULK CANNOT SEE!
AND, FOR SEVERAL RELENTLESS MINUTES, THE JADE-HUED GIANT ATTEMPTS TO MAKE GOOD HIS THREAT--
--HIS MASSIVE FISTS HAMMERING SAVAGELY AT THE MYSTIC BARRICADE THAT PROTECTS THE DOMICILE OF DOCTOR STRANGE IN ITS MASTER'S ABSENCE--
--UNTIL AT LAST, EVEN HIS BECLOUDED MIND COMES TO REALIZE THAT FURY IS FUTILE!
MAGICIAN IS NOT HOME--AND HULK CANNOT GET IN!
BUT MAGICIAN MUST COME HOME SOMETIME--
--AND WHEN HE DOES, HULK WILL BE WAITING!


THE DAWN COMES UP LIKE "THUNDERBOLT" ROSS'S FAMOUS TEMPER OVER THE NEW MEXICAN PARA-MILITARY INSTALLATION CALLED GAMMA BASE--
--AND, ON AN OTHERWISE DESERTED ATHLETIC FIELD, THE EMERALD-TRESSED DOC SAMSON GOES ABOUT HIS MORNING EXERCISES...
HI, DOC, HOW'RE THE OL' BICEPS?
GOOD MORNING, QUARTERMAIN. CARE TO JOIN ME?
NO THANKS, PAL. THIS IS FAR TOO FINE A DAY TO COME DOWN WITH A HERNIA!
HEY, I HEAR YOU CONVINCED GENERAL ROSS TO SHELVE HIS HULK-HUNT FINALLY.
A MOST IMPRESSIVE PIECE OF DIPLOMACY, M'MAN. I FIGURED OL' "THUNDERBOLT" WOULD KEEP HOUNDING THE HULK TILL ONE OF THEM DROPPED IN HIS TRACKS!
HOW'D YOU MANAGE TO TALK ROSS OUT OF IT?
IT WASN'T ALL THAT DIFFICULT, CLAY.
THE GENERAL FELT AS BAD AS I DID ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO JARELLA. SHE MAY HAVE BEEN BRUCE BANNER'S LAST CHANCE FOR HAPPINESS...
...AND THAT POOR GUY DESERVES ALL THE HAPPINESS HE CAN GET!
NOW HOW ABOUT YOU AND THE HULK, QUARTERMAIN?
I'M AN AGENT OF SHIELD, SAMSON-- I DO WHAT I'M TOLD!
AND IF I'M TOLD TO GET ON GREENSKIN'S BACK AGAIN--THEN THAT'S JUST WHAT I'LL HAVE TO DO!
IT'S YOUR JOB, EH? YOU SOUND DEPRESSINGLY LIKE THE OLD "THUNDERBOLT" ROSS!
LOOK, DESPITE EVERYTHING-- IN HIS OWN WAY, THE HULK IS AS HUMAN AS ANY OF US!
HE'S ENTITLED TO LIVE HIS LIFE AS HE SEES FIT--
--AND I AM GOING TO DO WHATEVER I HAVE TO DO TO HELP HIM!


IN NEW YORK CITY, THE SUN ROSE ABOVE THE POLLUTION SEVERAL HOURS AGO--AND VELMA WOLENSKY, A RATHER PUDGY EARLY-RISER INCLINED TO SWEATPANTS AND FLOWERED HATS, WAS OUT WALKING HER FRENCH POODLE CUDDLES AT 6:15 AS ALWAYS.
PASSING BY THAT QUEER-LOOKING TOWNHOUSE ON THE NEXT BLOCK, SHE HAPPENED TO NOTICE SOMETHING ELSE RESTING ALONG THE CURB, IN PLACE OF THE CUSTOMARY GARBAGE--
--AND BEING A PUBLIC-SPIRITED CITIZEN ABOVE ALL ELSE, VELMA WOLENSKY IMMEDIATELY NOTIFIED THE PROPER AUTHORITIES.
IT TOOK THEM 45 MINUTES TO MAKE SENSE OF HER HYSTERICAL BABBLING--
--AND CONSIDERABLY LESS TIME TO MOBILIZE EVERY S.W.A.T. TEAM AND RIOT SQUAD THEY COULD LAY THEIR SWEATING HANDS ON!
OKAY, MEN--LET'S JUST TRY TO KEEP THINGS CALM!
I DON'T WANT ANYBODY DOING ANYTHING STUPID WITHOUT PROPER PROVOCATION!
N.Y.P.D.
THAT BRUTE TORE THE STATUE OF LIBERTY APART BECAUSE HE THOUGHT HE WAS BEING ATTACKED WITHOUT CAUSE! I DON'T WANT THAT INCIDENT REPEATED IN A POPULATED AREA!
DO YOU REALLY THINK WE CAN CONTAIN HIM, CAPTAIN?
I DON'T KNOW, HOFFMAN--!
BUT STICK WITH ME, ROOKIE, AND WE'LL BOTH FIND OUT!
GO AWAY, LITTLE MEN! HULK DOES NOT WANT TROUBLE WITH YOU!
HULK IS JUST WAITING HERE FOR HULK'S FRIEND!
GO AWAY, PUNY HUMANS--OR YOU WILL REGRET IT!

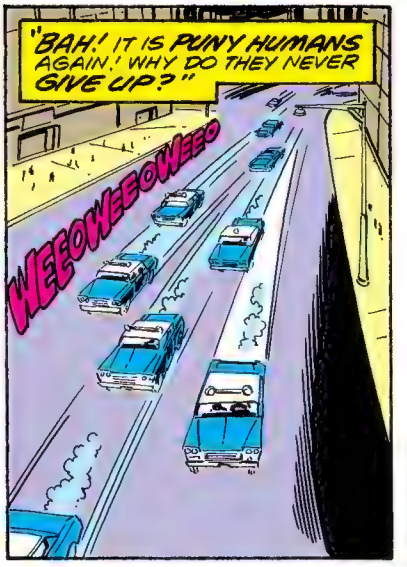
THIS IS PATROLMAN BRIAN HOFFMAN'S FIRST TIME UNDER FIRE, SO PERHAPS HE CAN BE FORGIVEN THE NERVOUSNESS THAT TIES A PAINFUL KNOT IN THE PIT OF HIS STOMACH...
NYPD
HULK WILL NOT WARN YOU AGAIN, LITTLE MEN!
GO AWAY!!
BUT CAN ANYONE FORGIVE HIM FOR DOING-- THIS!?!
NO! HE'S GOING TO ATTACK! I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM!
HOFFMAN-- DON'T!
B-DOW!
"SWEET GOD, BOY-- NOW YOU'VE REALLY DONE IT!"
BAH! PUNY HUMANS SHOOT AT HULK!
SPAK!
THEY IGNORE HULK'S WARNING!
AND, LITTLE MEN-- THAT MAKES HULK MAD!!
THOOM!
THE SHATTERING SHOCK-WAVE HURLS THE LAWMEN AND THEIR VEHICLES SKYWARD LIKE DUST-MOTES SNAPPED FROM A FILTHY CARPET--
--AND THE MAN-BRUTE IS JUST WARMING UP!
YOU BEGAN THIS BATTLE, LITTLE MEN--

--BUT IT IS HULK WHO WILL FINISH IT!
SKRASH!
NYPD
WHATEVER HAPPENS NOW IS YOUR FAULT, PUNY HUMANS-- REMEMBER THAT!
ALL HULK HAS EVER WANTED WAS TO BE LEFT ALONE-- TO BE LEFT IN PEACE--
RRAKK!
--BUT WHEREVER HULK HAS GONE, PUNY HUMANS HAVE HOUNDED HULK --TRIED TO KILL HULK--
NYPD
--AND FORCED HULK TO FIGHT BACK!!
PWHAMM!
THERE'S NO WAY ON EARTH WE'RE GONNA STOP THAT BRUISER OURSELVES!
WE NEED HELP-- THE SUPER-POWERED KIND!
AND IN THE BAXTER BUILDING HEADQUARTERS OF THE FAR-FAMED FANTASTIC FOUR, A SPECIAL POLICE-BAND EMERGENCY SIGNAL BEEPS FORTH ITS INSISTANT CALL...
N.Y.P.D. ALE
...BUT THERE IS NOBODY HOME TO HEAR!*
*SINCE THE FF IS STILL IN TRANSIT FROM COUNTER-EARTH, AS SHOWN IN THEIR LATEST ISSUE. --LEN.
QUICKLY, MAN-- FIRE THE NEUTRON-BAZOOKA!
TONY STARK HIMSELF DESIGNED IT FOR US! IT'S GOT FIRE-POWER ENOUGH TO FLATTEN A RAGING MOB!
FOOM!

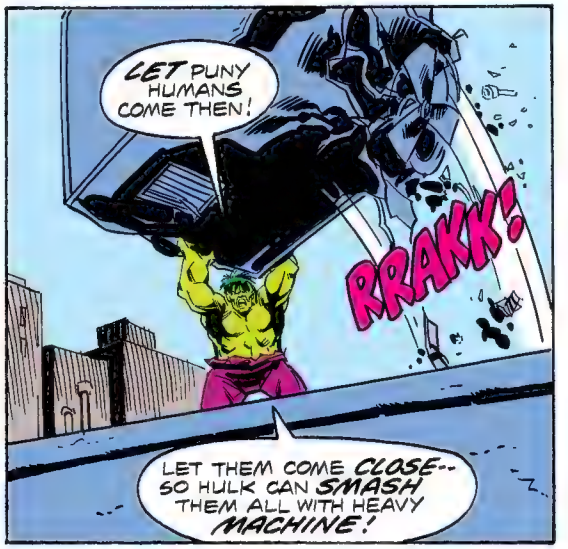
THE NEUTRON-SHELL ERUPTS WITH A NERVE-NUMBING FORCE THAT WOULD RENDER SEVERAL DOZEN PEOPLE SENSELESS FOR PRECISELY 45 MINUTES--
WHOOMP!
--BUT WHICH ONLY SERVES TO MAKE A CERTAIN MAN-BRUTE EVEN MADDER, IF POSSIBLE, THAN HE ALREADY IS!
ENOUGH!!
HULK IS DONE TRYING TO REASON WITH PUNY HUMANS!
HULK HAS SAID ALL HULK WILL SAY!
CHOOM!
HULK JUST WANTED TO WAIT HERE PEACEFULLY FOR MAGICIAN TO COME HOME--
--BUT IF ALL PUNY HUMANS WANT TO DO IS FIGHT--
--THEN HULK WILL GIVE THEM FIGHT!
WHAMM!
HULK WILL DESTROY THEM ALL!!
MERCIFUL MOTHER! WILL YOU LOOK AT WHAT HE'S DOING TO THOSE POOR COPS!?!
WHY AREN'T THE FANTASTIC FOUR HERE TO STOP HIM... OR THE AVENGERS... OR SPIDER-MAN... OR SOMEONE?
WNBS
TV
YES, COMMISSIONER--I'VE BEEN WATCHING THE CONFLICT ON THE TV!
YES SIR, I SHALL INFORM THE AVENGERS OF THE SITUATION AS SOON AS THEY RETURN TO NEW YORK!
YES SIR, I TOO HOPE IT WILL BE SOON!
BAH! HULK CANNOT KEEP FIGHTING WHILE JARELLA LIES HURT!
FIRST HULK MUST FIND MAGICIAN TO SAVE JARELLA--
--AND THEN HULK WILL SMASH EVERY HUMAN WHO GETS IN HULK'S WAY!

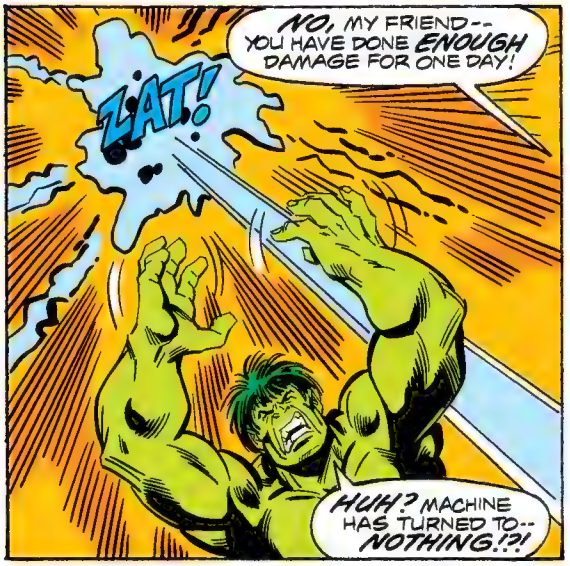
BUT, SHORTLY AFTER, ON THE DECAYING MANHATTAN WATER-FRONT...
NO MATTER WHERE HULK LOOKS, HULK CANNOT FIND MAGICIAN!
...AND HULK CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY!

MAGICIAN NEVER HAS TROUBLE FINDING HULK, SO WHY CAN'T HULK FIND...
WEEOWEEOW
HUH?
SOUND OF HOWLING-- COMING THIS WAY--!?!


"BAH! IT IS PUNY HUMANS AGAIN! WHY DO THEY NEVER GIVE UP?"
WEEOWEEOWEEO

WELL, HULK IS TIRED OF ALWAYS BEING CHASED BY LITTLE MEN--
--TIRED OF BEING CORNERED LIKE AN ANIMAL!


LET PUNY HUMANS COME THEN!
RRAKK!
LET THEM COME CLOSE-- SO HULK CAN SMASH THEM ALL WITH HEAVY MACHINE!


NO, MY FRIEND-- YOU HAVE DONE ENOUGH DAMAGE FOR ONE DAY!
ZAT!
HUH? MACHINE HAS TURNED TO-- NOTHING!?!

SOMEONE IS ON ROOF BEHIND HULK!
BUT WHOEVER IT IS, HULK WILL CRUSH HIM INTO...
YOU?!?

MAGICIAN! SWORD-GIRL! BIRD-NOSE! STAR-GIRL! HULK HAS FOUND YOU AT LAST!
NO, HULK--IT IS WE WHO HAVE FOUND YOU! FOR THE PAST SEVERAL HOURS, YOU HAVE BEEN TEARING THIS CITY APART--
--AND THE DEFENDERS HAVE COME TO PUT A STOP TO IT!!

NEXT ISSUE: IN MORTAL COMBAT WITH DOCTOR STRANGE...VALKYRIE ...NIGHTHAWK... AND THE RED GUARDIAN! IT'S THE HULK AT HIS MOST SAVAGE...

ALONE AGAINST THE DEFENDERS!

BE HERE!

INCREDIBLE HULK
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
207
JAN
02456
THE INCREDIBLE HULK®
ALONE AGAINST THE DEFENDERS!
THE HULK IS PULLING DOWN THE HIGHWAY!
IF WE DON'T STOP HIM-- HUNDREDS WILL DIE!!
Colletrum

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

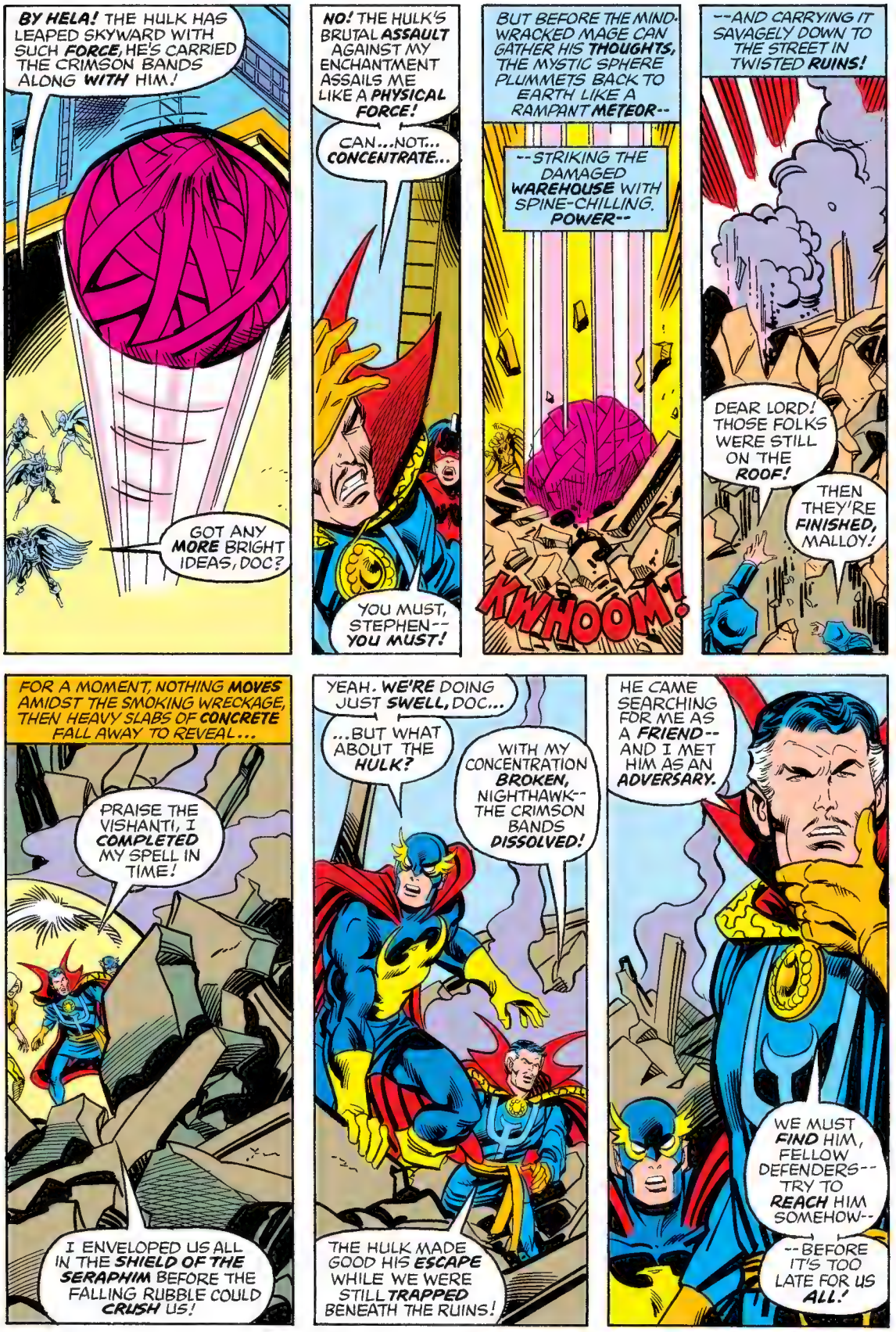
Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK! ™ C-170

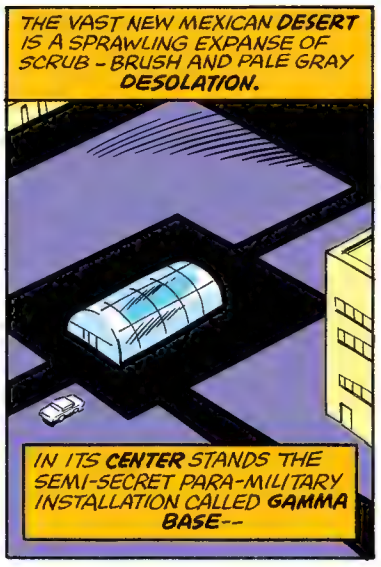
LEN WEIN WRITER / EDITOR | **SAL BUSCEMA & JOE STATON** ILLUSTRATORS | **GLYNIS WEIN** COLORIST | **IRV WATANABE** LETTERER

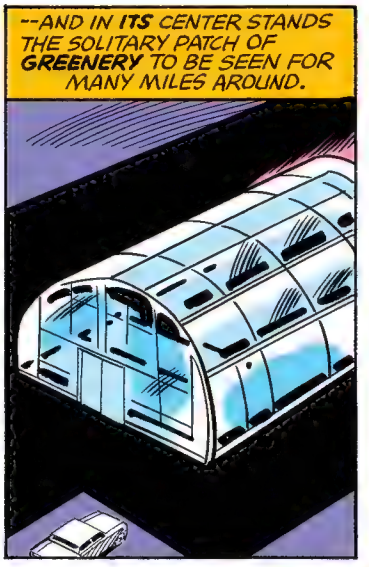
HOPING TO SOMEHOW SAVE THE LIFE OF THE WOMAN HE LOVES, THE HULK HAS DEVASTATED A GOODLY PORTION OF NEW YORK CITY, IN A RELENTLESS ATTEMPT TO FIND THE MAN CALLED DOCTOR STRANGE! NOW THE FURIOUS MAN-BRUTE STANDS...
ALONE AGAINST THE DEFENDERS!
AND THE INSECURE CITIZENS OF MANHATTAN MOUTH A HALF-HEARTED PRAYER THAT THERE WILL STILL BE SOMETHING LEFT OF THEIR ISLAND WHEN THIS IMPOSSIBLY-LONG DAY IS FINALLY THRU!
FOR THE PAST SEVERAL HOURS, HULK, YOU HAVE BEEN TEARING THIS CITY APART--
--AND WE HAVE COME TO PUT A STOP TO IT!!

I IMPLORE YOU, MY FRIEND--DO NOT FORCE US TO RAISE OUR HANDS AGAINST YOU!
JUST CALM YOURSELF, HULK--AND TELL US WHY YOU BEGAN THIS UNNECESSARY RAMPAGE!
WHY, VALKYRIE?
HULK WILL TELL YOU WHY!
BECAUSE OF THEM!
BECAUSE OF PUNY LITTLE MEN!!
WHEREVER HULK GOES, PUNY HUMANS HOUND HULK--WON'T LET HULK ALONE--WON'T LET HULK REST--
--AND HULK IS SICK OF IT!!
THOOM!
VALHALLA! HE'S SHATTERED A WHOLE SECTION OF THE WAREHOUSE WALL!
IT'S TOPPLING TOWARDS THE CROWD BELOW!
AND HULK IS GLAD!
RUN, MEN--RUN! GET OUT OF THE WAY--
--BEFORE THAT FALLING SLAB BECOMES OUR TOMBSTONE!
NEVER! THOUGH I AM NO LONGER SORCERER SUPREME, DOCTOR STRANGE IS STILL MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS!*
*AND IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE HIM, JUST CHECK OUT DOCTOR STRANGE #19 AND SEE FOR YOURSELF. --LEN.

"AND AT MY COMMAND, THE FLAMES OF THE FALTINE WILL REDUCE THAT PLUNGING BRICK AND MORTAR TO SO MUCH DRIFTING ASH!"
BAH! HULK THOUGHT YOU WERE HULK'S FRIENDS--
--BUT IF YOU PROTECT THE PUNY HUMANS WHO TRY TO HURT HULK--
--THEN HULK WILL HURT YOU!!
I CAN SEE THERE WILL BE NO REASONING WITH YOU FOR THE NONCE, MY FRIEND!
THUS LET THE CRIMSON BANDS OF CYTTORAK CONTAIN YOUR BURNING RAGE UNTIL IT COOLS!
NOT EXACTLY THE NEATEST LITTLE JOB OF GIFT-WRAPPING, DOC--BUT IT'S CERTAINLY EFFECTIVE!
IS IT, NIGHTHAWK? HAVING SEEN THAT BRUTE IN ACTION, I TRULY WONDER.
AND FRANKLY, RED GUARDIAN-- WE CAN'T BLAME YOU!
LET HULK OUT, MAGICIAN!
LET HULK OUT!!
PUNY BANDS WILL NOT HOLD HULK, MAGICIAN!
NOTHING CAN HOLD HULK!
NOTHING!!
BAH! HULK'S PUNCHES HAVE NO EFFECT ON STUPID BANDS!
BUT THERE ARE OTHER WAYS FOR HULK TO BREAK FREE!

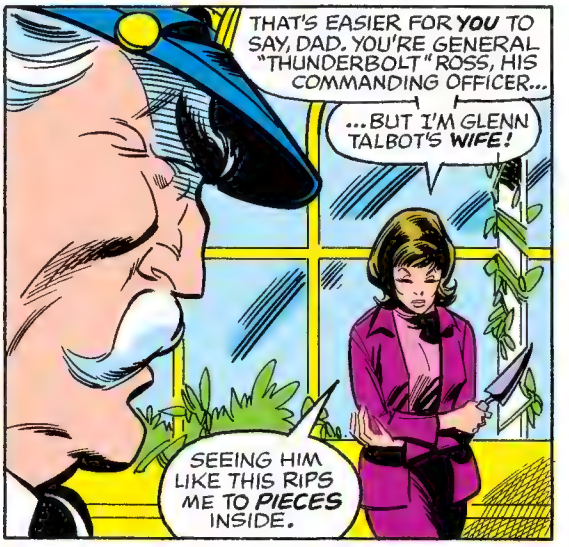

BY HELA! THE HULK HAS LEAPED SKYWARD WITH SUCH FORCE, HE'S CARRIED THE CRIMSON BANDS ALONG WITH HIM!
GOT ANY MORE BRIGHT IDEAS, DOC?
NO! THE HULK'S BRUTAL ASSAULT AGAINST MY ENCHANTMENT ASSAILS ME LIKE A PHYSICAL FORCE!
CAN...NOT... CONCENTRATE...
YOU MUST, STEPHEN-- YOU MUST!
BUT BEFORE THE MIND-WRACKED MAGE CAN GATHER HIS THOUGHTS, THE MYSTIC SPHERE PLUMMETS BACK TO EARTH LIKE A RAMPANT METEOR--
--STRIKING THE DAMAGED WAREHOUSE WITH SPINE-CHILLING. POWER--
KWHOOM!
--AND CARRYING IT SAVAGELY DOWN TO THE STREET IN TWISTED RUINS!
DEAR LORD! THOSE FOLKS WERE STILL ON THE ROOF!
THEN THEY'RE FINISHED, MALLOY!
FOR A MOMENT, NOTHING MOVES AMIDST THE SMOKING WRECKAGE, THEN HEAVY SLABS OF CONCRETE FALL AWAY TO REVEAL...
PRAISE THE VISHANTI, I COMPLETED MY SPELL IN TIME!
I ENVELOPED US ALL IN THE SHIELD OF THE SERAPHIM BEFORE THE FALLING RUBBLE COULD CRUSH US!
YEAH. WE'RE DOING JUST SWELL, DOC...
...BUT WHAT ABOUT THE HULK?
WITH MY CONCENTRATION BROKEN, NIGHTHAWK-- THE CRIMSON BANDS DISSOLVED!
THE HULK MADE GOOD HIS ESCAPE WHILE WE WERE STILL TRAPPED BENEATH THE RUINS!
HE CAME SEARCHING FOR ME AS A FRIEND-- AND I MET HIM AS AN ADVERSARY.
WE MUST FIND HIM, FELLOW DEFENDERS-- TRY TO REACH HIM SOMEHOW--
--BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE FOR US ALL!


THE VAST NEW MEXICAN DESERT IS A SPRAWLING EXPANSE OF SCRUB - BRUSH AND PALE GRAY DESOLATION.
IN ITS CENTER STANDS THE SEMI-SECRET PARA-MILITARY INSTALLATION CALLED GAMMA BASE--


--AND IN ITS CENTER STANDS THE SOLITARY PATCH OF GREENERY TO BE SEEN FOR MANY MILES AROUND.

BUT THOUGH THIS LONELY NURSERY IS GREEN IN COLOR, THE MOOD HERE IS MOST DEFINITELY BLUE.
SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH YOU, BETTY--THAT MUCH IS OBVIOUS.
CARE TO TELL YOUR FAITHFUL FATHER WHAT IT IS?
I'M THAT TRANSPARENT, HUH?

I'M AFRAID IT'S GLENN, DAD. HE JUST HASN'T BEEN THE SAME SINCE HE REGAINED HIS MEMORY.*
WELL, YOU CAN'T EXPECT A MAN TO GO THRU WHAT HE'S BEEN THRU WITHOUT IT AFFECTING HIM SOMEHOW.
JUST GIVE HIM A CHANCE TO FIND HIMSELF AGAIN.
*BACK IN HULK #200, RIGHT?--LEN.


THAT'S EASIER FOR YOU TO SAY, DAD. YOU'RE GENERAL "THUNDERBOLT" ROSS, HIS COMMANDING OFFICER...
...BUT I'M GLENN TALBOT'S WIFE!
SEEING HIM LIKE THIS RIPS ME TO PIECES INSIDE.

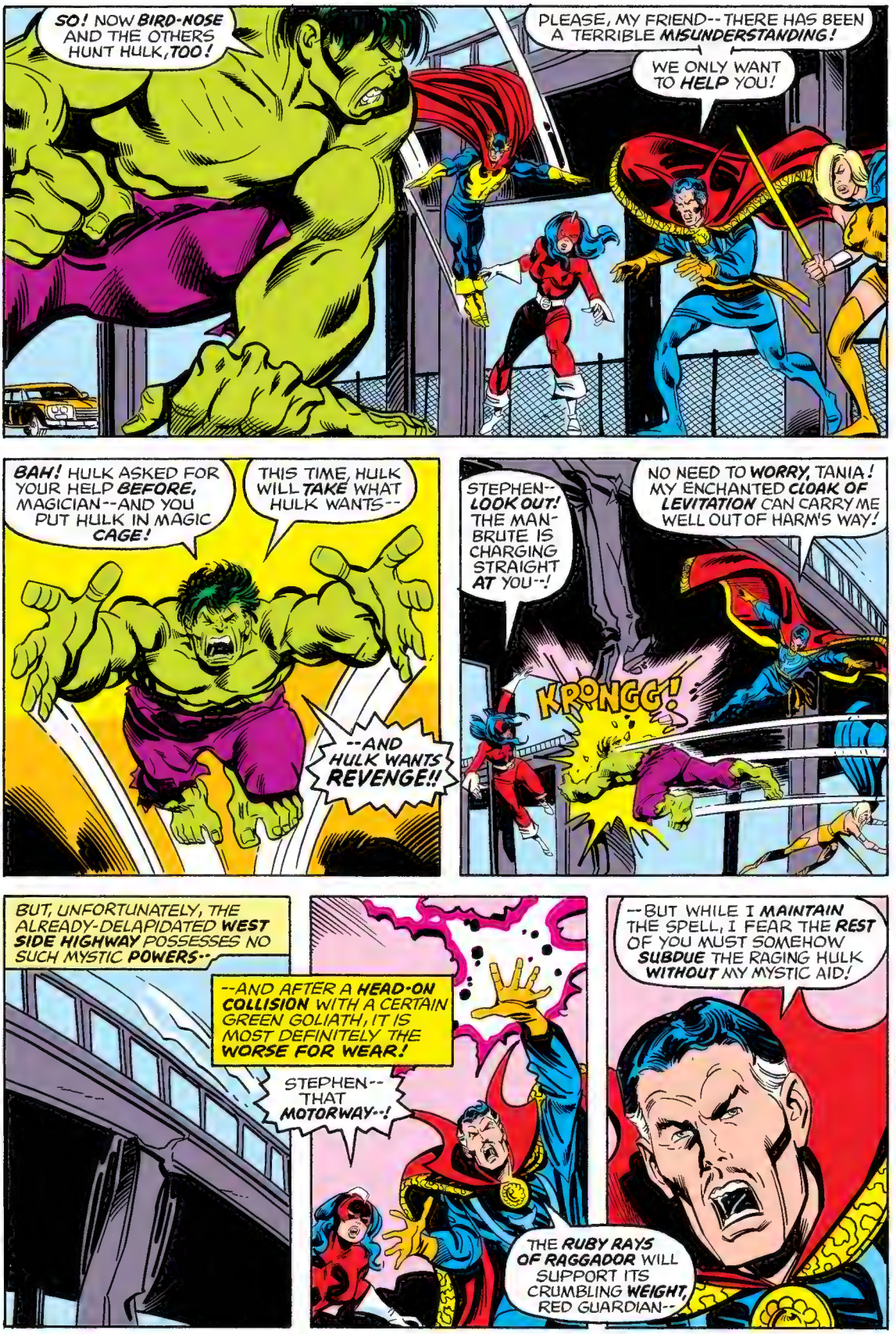
I LOVE GLENN, DADDY. I WANT TO REACH OUT TO HIM--BUT HE WON'T LET ME.
WITH ALL MY HEART, I WANT TO HELP HIM...

...BUT I... I JUST DON'T KNOW HOW.
HEY NOW, GIRL--DON'T GO ALL WEEPY ON ME.
YOUR OLD DAD IS HERE, BETTY.

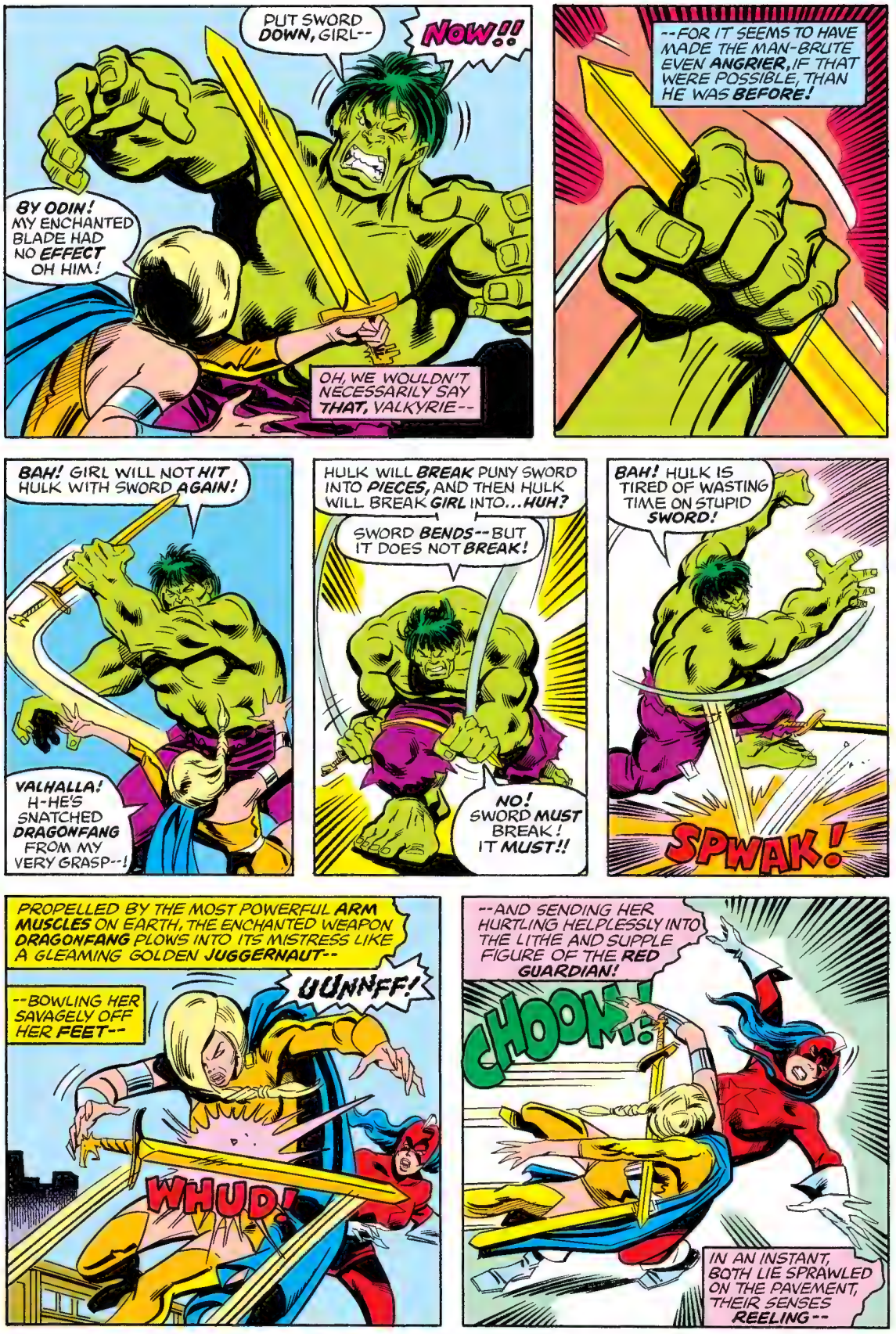
I KNOW I WASN'T MUCH OF A FATHER TO YOU WHEN YOU WERE YOUNGER, CHILD--
--BUT MAYBE I CAN MAKE IT UP TO YOU NOW.
THERE HAS TO BE A WAY TO HELP GLENN, BETTY--AND I SWEAR TO YOU, WE'LL FIND IT!

MEANWHILE, IN THE MUCK-ENCRUSTED MAZE THAT IS THE NEW YORK CITY SEWER SYSTEM...
WHAT DOES HULK DO NOW?
MAGICIAN WAS HULK'S ONLY HOPE OF MAKING JARELLA WELL AGAIN, BUT IF MAGICIAN HAS TURNED AGAINST HULK...!
NO! HULK WILL NOT THINK ABOUT THAT!
FIRST HULK WILL FIND HULK'S WAY OUT OF FOUL-SMELLING TUNNEL, AND THEN...HUH?
LIGHT COMING IN THRU TUNNEL ROOF!
MAYBE THAT IS THE WAY OUT!
ON THE STREET ABOVE, THERE IS THE SUDDEN GRATING SOUND OF METAL BEING SLOWLY PUSHED ASIDE--
THEN A SUSPICIOUS PAIR OF EMERALD EYES PEER OUT OF THE STIFLING DARKNESS--
--AND GROW WIDE IN DISBELIEF!
NO! IT CANNOT BE!
CAN IT?
GIRL STANDING ON STREET... HER HAIR...HER CLOTHES... SHE LOOKS LIKE...
...JARELLA?
BUS STOP
COULD IT BE? IS JARELLA WELL AGAIN?
HAS SHE COME TO BIG CITY LOOKING FOR HULK?
OR IS IT JUST ANOTHER TRICK OF PUNY HUMANS-- TO TEAR HULK'S HEART APART?
PLEASE... LET IT BE TRUE!
JARELLA?
IS IT REALLY YOU?

EH?
YES, WHAT CAN I DO FOR...
OH... MY... GOD!
BAH! HULK WAS RIGHT! IT IS NOT JARELLA!
IT IS ONLY PUNY HUMAN!
P-P-PLEASE, MISTER--I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!
J-J-JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!
LEAVE...YOU... ALONE?
HAH!
HULK ALWAYS ASKS LITTLE MEN TO LEAVE HULK ALONE-- BUT DO THEY EVER LISTEN?
NO!!
ALWAYS THEY ATTACK HULK--TRY TO KILL HULK!
THEY NEVER LISTEN TO HULK, GIRL--
--SO WHY SHOULD HULK LISTEN TO YOU?
N-N-NO! PLEASE-- STAY BACK!
DIDN'T YOU HEAR THE LITTLE LADY, JADE-JAWS? SHE SAID "PLEASE"!
SO BACK OFF, BUSTER-- OR ELSE!!
HUHNN?!?
SPANG!


SO! NOW BIRD-NOSE AND THE OTHERS HUNT HULK, TOO!
PLEASE, MY FRIEND--THERE HAS BEEN A TERRIBLE MISUNDERSTANDING!
WE ONLY WANT TO HELP YOU!
BAH! HULK ASKED FOR YOUR HELP BEFORE, MAGICIAN--AND YOU PUT HULK IN MAGIC CAGE!
THIS TIME, HULK WILL TAKE WHAT HULK WANTS--
--AND HULK WANTS REVENGE!!
STEPHEN--LOOK OUT! THE MAN-BRUTE IS CHARGING STRAIGHT AT YOU--!
NO NEED TO WORRY, TANIA! MY ENCHANTED CLOAK OF LEVITATION CAN CARRY ME WELL OUT OF HARM'S WAY!
KRONGG!
BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, THE ALREADY-DELAPIDATED WEST SIDE HIGHWAY POSSESSES NO SUCH MYSTIC POWERS--
--AND AFTER A HEAD-ON COLLISION WITH A CERTAIN GREEN GOLIATH, IT IS MOST DEFINITELY THE WORSE FOR WEAR!
STEPHEN--THAT MOTORWAY--!
--BUT WHILE I MAINTAIN THE SPELL, I FEAR THE REST OF YOU MUST SOMEHOW SUBDUE THE RAGING HULK WITHOUT MY MYSTIC AID!
THE RUBY RAYS OF RAGGADOR WILL SUPPORT ITS CRUMBLING WEIGHT, RED GUARDIAN--

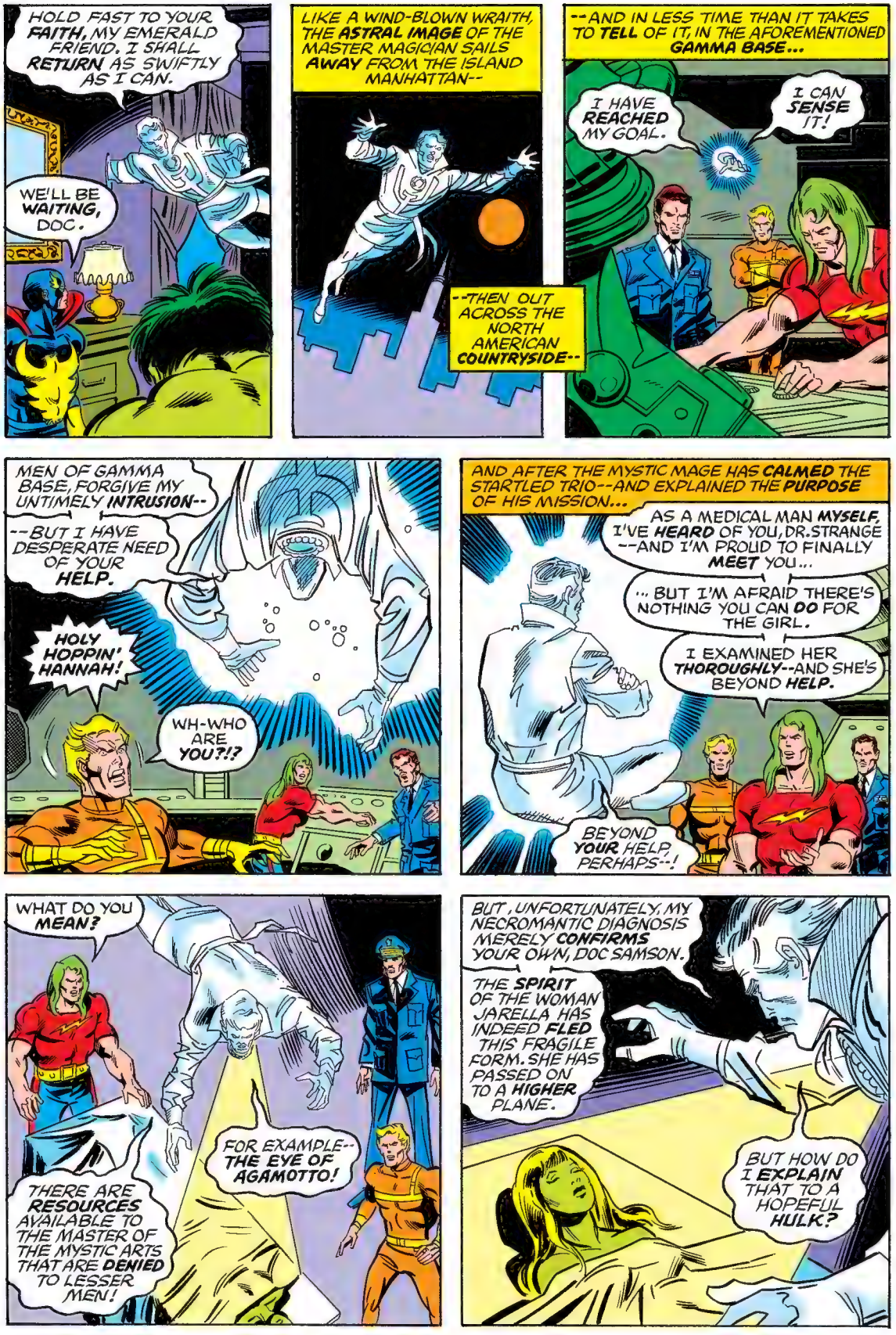
COME THEN, FALSE FRIENDS! COME AND TRY TO CAPTURE HULK!
COME CLOSE--SO HULK CAN CRUSH YOU ALL LIKE BUGS!!
NOW HOW CAN ANYONE TURN DOWN SUCH A CHARMING INVITATION?
DON'T JEST, NIGHTHAWK! WITH SUCH FURY IN HIS VOICE...SUCH FIRE IN HIS EYE...
...I'M AFRAID THERE'LL BE NO CALMING THE HULK AS IT IS!
THEN WE'LL TAKE HIM BY FORCE IF WE MUST!
"MY BELT BUCKLE WAS DESIGNED BY SOVIET SCIENTISTS AS A WEAPON EQUALLED ONLY BY CAPTAIN AMERICA'S LEGENDARY SHIELD!"
WAK!
SPAK!
HUH??
WELL DONE, RED GUARDIAN! YOUR WEAPON HAS CONFUSED HIM MOMENTARILY--
--ENABLING ME TO GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO STRIKE!
SPANG!
FORGIVE ME, MY EMERALD FRIEND--
--BUT I DO THIS AS MUCH FOR YOUR SAKE AS FOR OURS!
CHUDD!


PUT SWORD DOWN, GIRL--
NOW!!
BY ODIN! MY ENCHANTED BLADE HAD NO EFFECT OH HIM!
OH, WE WOULDN'T NECESSARILY SAY THAT, VALKYRIE--
--FOR IT SEEMS TO HAVE MADE THE MAN-BRUTE EVEN ANGRIER, IF THAT WERE POSSIBLE, THAN HE WAS BEFORE!
BAH! GIRL WILL NOT HIT HULK WITH SWORD AGAIN!
VALHALLA! H-HE'S SNATCHED DRAGONFANG FROM MY VERY GRASP--!
HULK WILL BREAK PUNY SWORD INTO PIECES, AND THEN HULK WILL BREAK GIRL INTO... HUH?
SWORD BENDS--BUT IT DOES NOT BREAK!
NO! SWORD MUST BREAK! IT MUST!!
BAH! HULK IS TIRED OF WASTING TIME ON STUPID SWORD!
SPWAK!
PROPELLED BY THE MOST POWERFUL ARM MUSCLES ON EARTH, THE ENCHANTED WEAPON DRAGONFANG PLOWS INTO ITS MISTRESS LIKE A GLEAMING GOLDEN JUGGERNAUT--
--BOWLING HER SAVAGELY OFF HER FEET--
UUNFF!
WHUD!
--AND SENDING HER HURTLING HELPLESSLY INTO THE LITHE AND SUPPLE FIGURE OF THE RED GUARDIAN!
CHOOM!
IN AN INSTANT, BOTH LIE SPRAWLED ON THE PAVEMENT, THEIR SENSES REELING--

--WHILE THE MYSTIC MAGE LOOKS ON IN RAPIDLY-GROWING DESPAIR...
I CANNOT DROP MY SPELL FOR EVEN A MOMENT--OR THE ENTIRE HIGHWAY WILL COLLAPSE!
IF ANYONE WILL DEFEAT THE HULK, IT HAS TO BE NIGHTHAWK!
THAT'S A STIRRING DISPLAY OF CONFIDENCE, DOC--BUT THE ONLY HOPE I HAVE OF BEATING GREENILOCKS IS TO HIT HIM WHILE HE'S OFF-BALANCE...
...AND THEN PRAY HE GETS STRUCK BY LIGHTNING OR SOMETHING!
WHOM!
BECAUSE ONE-ON-ONE, I'VE GOT ABOUT THE SAME CHANCE OF CLOBBERING THE HULK AS WOODY ALLEN HAS OF TAKING ON MUHAMMAD ALI!
KTOW!
SWELL! ALL I'VE MANAGED TO DO SO FAR IS BRUISE BOTH OF MY HANDS--
--AND NOW IT LOOKS LIKE JADE-JAWS IS GOING TO BRUISE HIS FIST-- WHILE HE RE-ARRANGES MY FACE!
STAND STILL, BIRD-NOSE--SO HULK CAN SMASH!
SORRY, BIG FELLA--BUT I'M JUST NOT ALL THAT ANXIOUS TO COMMIT SUICIDE!
BAH!
IF YOU WANT ME, GREENSKIN-- YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO COME AND GET ME!
THEN THAT IS WHAT HULK WILL DO!
OKAY, I'VE MANAGED TO LURE HIM OFF THE HIGHWAY--
--SO NOW WHAT?

BLAST! I FORGOT HOW FAST HE CAN MOVE-- AND THAT JUST MAY BE THE LAST MISTAKE I MAKE!
HE'S GOT ME CORNERED!
AND NOW, BIRD-NOSE, HULK WILL MAKE YOU PAY FOR BETRAYING HULK!
NOW HULK IS GOING TO...
NO, HULK-- WAIT!
PLEASE, BIG FELLA-- TRY TO REALIZE WHAT YOU'RE DOING!
OKAY, SO YOU CAME TO US FOR HELP--AND WE GOT OUR WIRES CROSSED. WE'RE SORRY ABOUT THAT, MAN--AND WE'RE TRYING TO SET THINGS STRAIGHT!
YOU'VE GOT TO GIVE US THAT CHANCE!
SOMEWHERE IN THE BACK OF YOUR MIND, HULK--YOU KNOW WE'RE YOUR FRIENDS!
SMASH US--AND WHO DO YOU HAVE LEFT? WHO WILL YOU TURN TO THEN?
THINK ABOUT IT, HULK-- THINK ABOUT IT!!
NO! BIRD-NOSE IS TRYING TO CONFUSE HULK--
--BUT HULK WILL NOT LISTEN!
SHUT UP, BIRD-NOSE, OR HULK WILL... WILL... WILL...
AARRGGHH!!
WHOOM!
AT THE LAST POSSIBLE SECOND, H-HE PULLED HIS PUNCH!
THANK HEAVEN I GOT THRU TO HIM!
YOU ARE RIGHT, BIRD-NOSE, YOU ARE HULK'S FRIENDS--
--AND HULK NEEDS FRIENDS NOW... MORE THAN EVER!
WELL, YOU'VE GOT 'EM, CHUM. JUST TELL US WHAT WE CAN DO TO HELP.
THIS TIME WE'LL LISTEN.

AND MOMENTS LATER...
FORGIVE THIS DELAY, HULK--BUT IT IS NECESSARY!
SPLANG!
WE MUST REPAIR THE DAMAGE WE HAVE WROUGHT, MY EMERALD FRIEND--BEFORE WE CAN LEAVE HERE IN GOOD CONSCIENCE.
HULK WILL DO AS YOU SAY...FRIENDS.
THEN, SHORTLY THEREAFTER, IN THE GREENWICH VILLAGE SANCTUM SANCTORUM OF THE MAN CALLED DOCTOR STRANGE...
...AND THAT IS ALL HULK CAN REMEMBER!
GIRL CALLED BETTY SAID THAT SCIENCE COULD NOT HELP HULK'S JARELLA--
--SO HULK WENT LOOKING FOR YOU!
I AM TRULY TOUCHED THAT YOU PLACE SO MUCH FAITH IN ME, HULK--BUT THERE IS MUCH THAN EVEN I CANNOT ACCOMPLISH.
THE FORCES OF LIFE AND DEATH WEAVE A MOST DELICATE TAPESTRY INDEED--ONE THAT CANNOT EASILY BE TAMPERED WITH!
IF MAGICIAN CANNOT MAKE JARELLA WELL AGAIN...THEN NOBODY CAN!
BUT FOR YOUR SAKE, MY FRIEND--AND FOR THE SAKE OF THE WOMAN YOU LOVE--
--I PROMISE I WILL DO WHAT I CAN!
THEN, WITHOUT ANOTHER WORD, THE MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS TAKES HIS PLACE IN THE CENTER OF AN ARCANE PENTAGRAM INSCRIBED IN THE VERY FLOOR--
--AND, WITH AN INCANTATION ON HIS LIPS AND A FERVENT PRAYER IN HIS HEART--
--HE SETS HIS SPIRIT FREE!


HOLD FAST TO YOUR FAITH, MY EMERALD FRIEND. I SHALL RETURN AS SWIFTLY AS I CAN.
WE'LL BE WAITING, DOC.
LIKE A WIND-BLOWN WRAITH, THE ASTRAL IMAGE OF THE MASTER MAGICIAN SAILS AWAY FROM THE ISLAND MANHATTAN--
--THEN OUT ACROSS THE NORTH AMERICAN COUNTRYSIDE--
--AND IN LESS TIME THAN IT TAKES TO TELL OF IT, IN THE AFOREMENTIONED GAMMA BASE...
I HAVE REACHED MY GOAL.
I CAN SENSE IT!
MEN OF GAMMA BASE, FORGIVE MY UNTIMELY INTRUSION--
--BUT I HAVE DESPERATE NEED OF YOUR HELP.
HOLY HOPPIN' HANNAH!
WH-WHO ARE YOU?!?
AND AFTER THE MYSTIC MAGE HAS CALMED THE STARTLED TRIO--AND EXPLAINED THE PURPOSE OF HIS MISSION...
AS A MEDICAL MAN MYSELF, I'VE HEARD OF YOU, DR. STRANGE --AND I'M PROUD TO FINALLY MEET YOU...
... BUT I'M AFRAID THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO FOR THE GIRL.
I EXAMINED HER THOROUGHLY--AND SHE'S BEYOND HELP.
BEYOND YOUR HELP, PERHAPS--!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
FOR EXAMPLE-- THE EYE OF AGAMOTTO!
THERE ARE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THE MASTER OF THE MYSTIC ARTS THAT ARE DENIED TO LESSER MEN!
BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, MY NECROMANTIC DIAGNOSIS MERELY CONFIRMS YOUR OWN, DOC SAMSON.
THE SPIRIT OF THE WOMAN JARELLA HAS INDEED FLED THIS FRAGILE FORM. SHE HAS PASSED ON TO A HIGHER PLANE.
BUT HOW DO I EXPLAIN THAT TO A HOPEFUL HULK?

AS A WORD, HOPEFUL DOES NOT TRULY DESCRIBE THE SOLITARY MAN-BRUTE WHO ANXIOUSLY AWAITS THE SORCERER'S RETURN.
PERHAPS FEARFUL WOULD BE MORE TO THE POINT.
FOR ALL OF HIS MISERABLE LIFE, THE HULK HAS WANTED NOTHING MORE THAN SOMEONE HE COULD SHARE THE LONELY HOURS WITH, SOMEONE HE COULD BE CLOSE TO--
--AND NOW THAT HE HAS FOUND THAT SOMEONE, HE IS TERRIFIED OF LOSING HER.
BUT THE GREEN GOLIATH IS NOT REALLY ABLE TO PUT SUCH THOUGHTS INTO WORDS, AND SO HE SITS IN SILENCE...
...AND BROODS.
SOME TEA, EMERALD SIR?
NO.
IT IS A VERY SPECIAL BLEND, SIR--PERHAPS IT WOULD HELP TO CALM YOU.
HULK SAID-- NO!
OF COURSE, SIR--FORGIVE ME. I DID NOT MEAN TO INTERRUPT YOUR VIGIL.
DON'T LET JADE-JAWS BOTHER YOU, WONG. HE WON'T EXACTLY BE THE LIFE OF THE PARTY UNTIL DOC STRANGE GETS BACK FROM...
BUT I AM BACK, NIGHTHAWK.
DON'T YOU EVER USE A DOOR?
BUT WHERE IS JARELLA, MAGICIAN? WHY IS SHE NOT WITH YOU?
I'M SORRY, MY FRIEND-- DREADFULLY SORRY--BUT I HAVE FAILED YOU.
TRY TO UNDERSTAND, HULK-- THERE ARE THINGS IN THIS LIFE BEYOND THE KEN OF EVEN THE WISEST MEN.
WHY THOSE WE LOVE ARE TAKEN FROM US IN FURY IS PERHAPS THE DARKEST QUESTION OF ALL.
JARELLA IS GONE, MY FRIEND-- AND THERE IS NO WAY TO SUMMON HER BACK.
YOU MUST TRY TO GO ON WITHOUT HER--AS SHE WOULD WANT YOU TO.
JARELLA IS... DEAD?

NoOOooOo!!
JARELLA IS NOT DEAD! SHE CANNOT BE DEAD!!
HULK TOLD BETTY THAT MAGICIAN WOULD HELP JARELLA!
HULK SAID YOU WOULD MAKE JARELLA WELL AGAIN!
KROOM!
IF MAGICIAN CANNOT HELP, THEN HULK WILL SAVE JARELLA!
HULK CAN DO IT! HULK CAN DO ANYTHING!
THA-KOOM!
HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!!
STEPHEN, WE'VE GOT TO STOP HIM--BEFORE HE DESTROYS EVERYTHING!
NO, VALKYRIE--LET HIM BE!
THE HULK MUST DEAL WITH HIS GRIEF IN HIS OWN WAY!
THEY ARE THE LEAST I CAN OFFER HIM, VAL.
AFTER ALL... HE'S MY FRIEND.
BUT ALL YOUR PRECIOUS ARTIFACTS--!
FOR A TIME, DOCTOR STRANGE'S SANCTUM SANCTORUM TREMBLES BEFORE THE MINDLESS ONSLAUGHT OF THE JADE BEHEMOTH'S BLIND, UNREASONING RAGE--
KWA-DOOM!
--THEN, AS SWIFTLY AS IT BEGAN, THE MAN-BRUTE'S FURY PASSES--
--THE CATHARSIS OF THE MONSTER IS ABRUPTLY OVER--

--AND ALL THAT REMAINS IS A LOST AND LONELY CHILD.
JARELLA IS DEAD?
REALLY...DEAD?
YES, MY FRIEND--
--THOUGH, WITH ALL MY HEART, I WISH IT WERE NOT SO!
THEN... HULK IS... ALONE... AGAIN...
NO, HULK... NOT ALONE...
YOU STILL HAVE THE DEFENDERS.
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, MY DEAR, DEAR FRIEND...
...YOU WILL ALWAYS HAVE... US!
SEVERAL HEARTBREAKING MINUTES PASS, AS THE GREEN GOLIATH'S BODY IS WRACKED BY SILENT SOBBING--
--THEN SUDDENLY, HE LIFTS HIS HEAVY HEAD FROM HIS HANDS, HIS EMERALD FACE ENTIRELY DEVOID OF EMOTION...
HULK, ARE YOU...?
HULK IS ALL RIGHT, VALKYRIE-- AND HULK IS SORRY, MAGICIAN, FOR ALL THE DAMAGE HULK HAS CAUSED!
HULK MUST LEAVE NOW!
LEAVE? BUT WHERE WILL YOU GO, MY FRIEND?
WHAT WILL YOU DO?
HULK DOES NOT KNOW, MAGICIAN...
...AND HULK DOES NOT CARE!
IF JARELLA IS TRULY GONE... IF HULK HAS LOST FOREVER THE ONE HULK LOVES...
...THEN NOTHING REALLY MATTERS... ANYMORE.
K-THUM!

NEXT ISSUE: THE BEGINNING OF A WHOLE NEW DIRECTION FOR EVERYONE'S FAVORITE MAN-BRUTE--PLUS THE UNEXPECTED RETURN OF SOME OLD FAMILIAR FACES! BELIEVE US, PILGRIM, EXCITEMENT AS YOU'VE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE AWAITS YOU IN THE STARTLING SAGA WE CALL... "A MONSTER IN OUR MIDST!"

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THIS IS IT!
THE DRAMATIC TURNING POINT IN THE LIFE OF BRUCE BANNER!
A MONSTER IN OUR MIDST!

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!™

LEN WEIN *WRITER/EDITOR* ✳ SAL BUSCEMA & JOE STATON *ILLUSTRATORS* ✳ GLYNIS WEIN *COLORIST* ✳ JOE R. & IRV W. *LETTERERS*

A MONSTER IN OUR MIDST!

LAST NIGHT, THEY TOOK HIS **WORLD** AWAY!

HIS WORLD WAS GREEN-SKINNED AND GOLDEN-HAIRED, WITH EYES LIKE TORCH-LIT POOLS AND A SMILE THAT COULD TURN AWAY THE DARK. HIS WORLD WAS NAMED **JARELLA!**

BUT LAST NIGHT, THE MAN CALLED **DOCTOR STRANGE** TOLD HIM SHE WOULD NEVER BE COMING **BACK** AGAIN, SO HE RAGED AND HE CRIED AND, AT LAST, WHEN ALL THE **TEARS** WERE GONE, HE SURRENDERED TO THE THOUGHT.

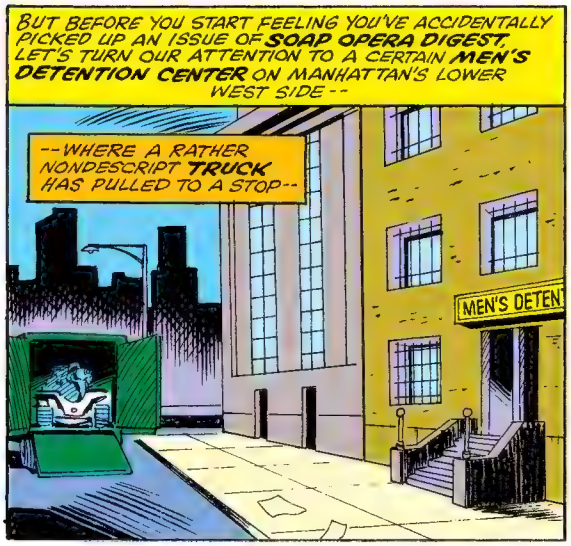
NOW HE WALKS THE CROWDED STREETS OF NEW YORK CITY A GREAT GREEN EMPTY **SHELL,** DEVOID OF ALL **FEELING**--

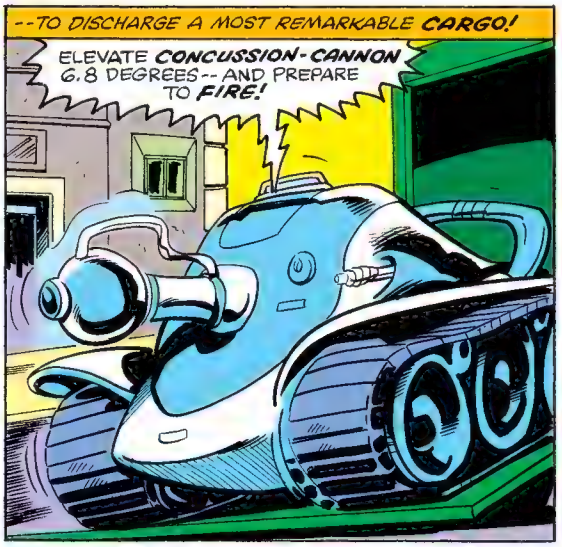
--SAVE THE OVERWHELMING FEELING OF **LOSS!**

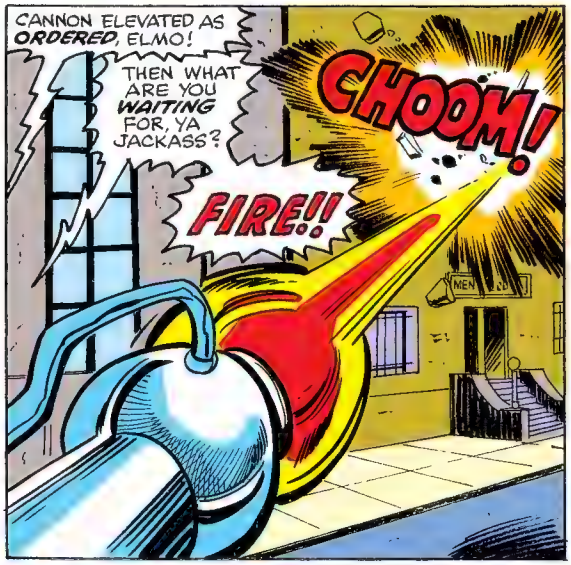
JUST **STAY BACK,** EVERYONE! THERE'S NO TELLING **WHAT** THAT MONSTER IS LIABLE TO **DO!**

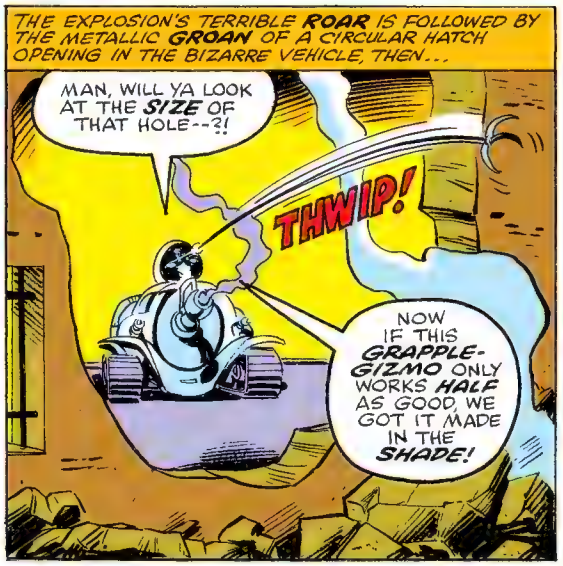
NORMALLY, THE MAN-BRUTE WOULD BE DOING PLENTY BY NOW, LASHING OUT IN SAVAGE FURY AT THOSE WHO HATE AND FEAR HIM, BUT INSTEAD...
I JUST DON'T GET IT.
IT'S AS IF HE DOESN'T EVEN NOTICE WE'RE ALL HERE!
AND, IN POINT OF FACT, HE DOES NOT--

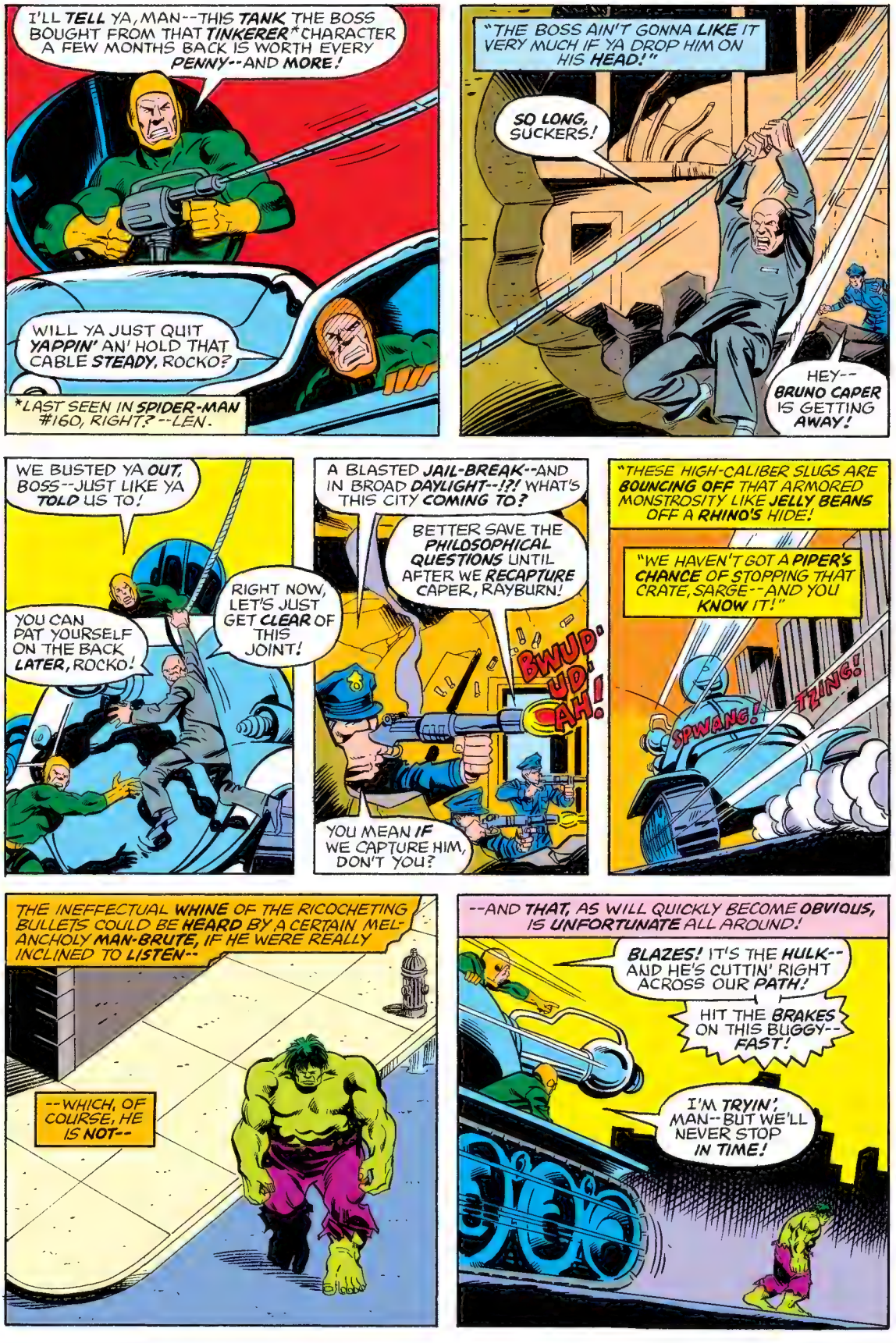
--FOR, AT THE MOMENT, HE HAS FAR MORE IMPORTANT THINGS ON WHAT PASSES FOR HIS MIND!
JARELLA.
WHY, JARELLA?
WHY?


BUT BEFORE YOU START FEELING YOU'VE ACCIDENTALLY PICKED UP AN ISSUE OF SOAP OPERA DIGEST, LET'S TURN OUR ATTENTION TO A CERTAIN MEN'S DETENTION CENTER ON MANHATTAN'S LOWER WEST SIDE --
--WHERE A RATHER NONDESCRIPT TRUCK HAS PULLED TO A STOP--
MEN'S DETEN

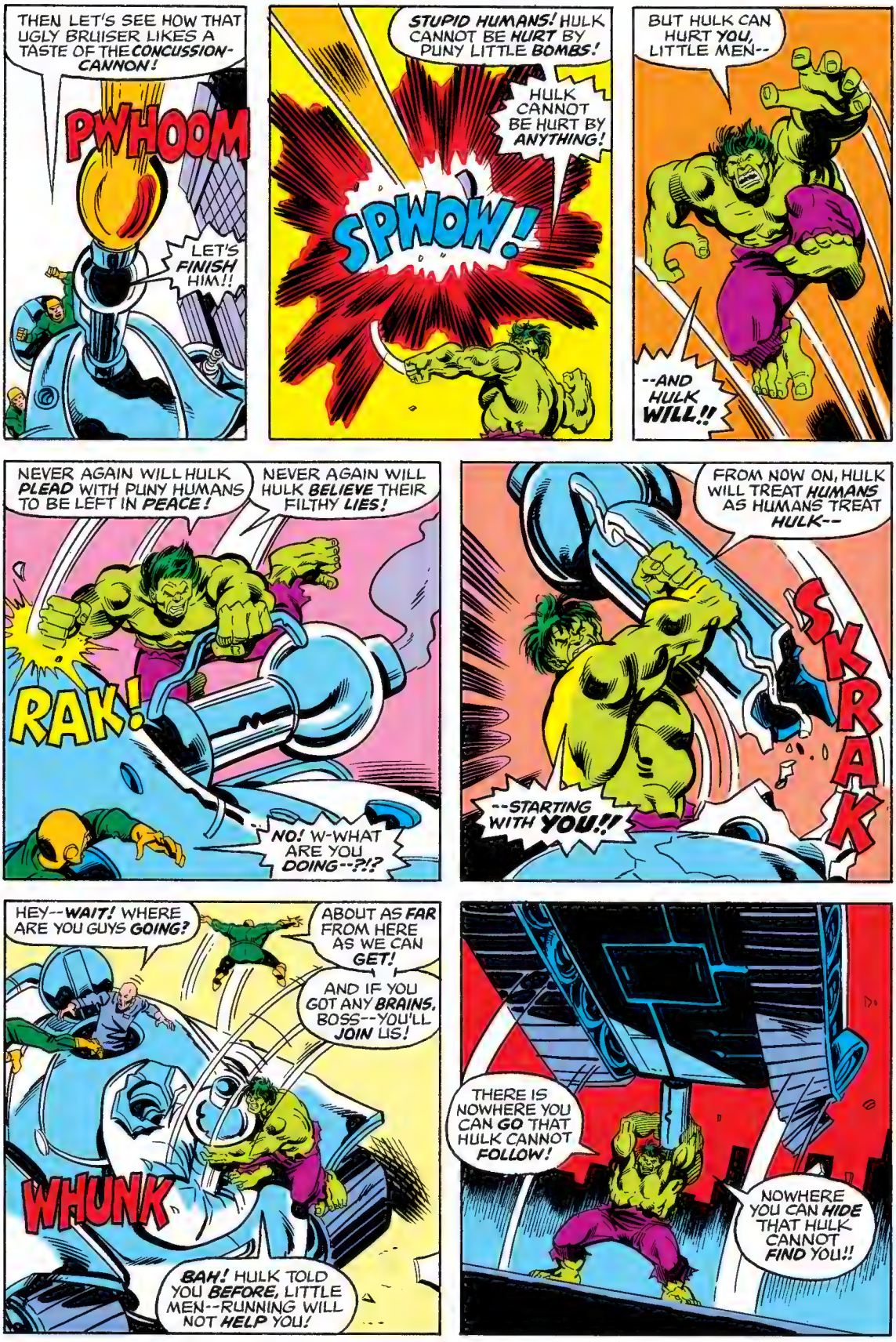

--TO DISCHARGE A MOST REMARKABLE CARGO!
ELEVATE CONCUSSION-CANNON 6.8 DEGREES-- AND PREPARE TO FIRE!


CANNON ELEVATED AS ORDERED, ELMO!
THEN WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR, YA JACKASS?
CHOOM!
FIRE!!
MEN


THE EXPLOSION'S TERRIBLE ROAR IS FOLLOWED BY THE METALLIC GROAN OF A CIRCULAR HATCH OPENING IN THE BIZARRE VEHICLE, THEN...
MAN, WILL YA LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT HOLE--?!
THWIP!
NOW IF THIS GRAPPLE-GIZMO ONLY WORKS HALF AS GOOD, WE GOT IT MADE IN THE SHADE!


I'LL TELL YA, MAN--THIS TANK THE BOSS BOUGHT FROM THAT TINKERER* CHARACTER A FEW MONTHS BACK IS WORTH EVERY PENNY--AND MORE!
WILL YA JUST QUIT YAPPIN' AN' HOLD THAT CABLE STEADY, ROCKO?
*LAST SEEN IN SPIDER-MAN #160, RIGHT? --LEN.
"THE BOSS AIN'T GONNA LIKE IT VERY MUCH IF YA DROP HIM ON HIS HEAD!"
SO LONG, SUCKERS!
HEY-- BRUNO CAPER IS GETTING AWAY!
WE BUSTED YA OUT, BOSS--JUST LIKE YA TOLD US TO!
YOU CAN PAT YOURSELF ON THE BACK LATER, ROCKO!
RIGHT NOW, LET'S JUST GET CLEAR OF THIS JOINT!
A BLASTED JAIL-BREAK--AND IN BROAD DAYLIGHT--!?! WHAT'S THIS CITY COMING TO?
BETTER SAVE THE PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS UNTIL AFTER WE RECAPTURE CAPER, RAYBURN!
BWUD-UD-AH!
YOU MEAN IF WE CAPTURE HIM, DON'T YOU?
"THESE HIGH-CALIBER SLUGS ARE BOUNCING OFF THAT ARMORED MONSTROSITY LIKE JELLY BEANS OFF A RHINO'S HIDE!
"WE HAVEN'T GOT A PIPER'S CHANCE OF STOPPING THAT CRATE, SARGE--AND YOU KNOW IT!"
SPWANG!
IZING!
THE INEFFECTUAL WHINE OF THE RICOCHETING BULLETS COULD BE HEARD BY A CERTAIN MELANCHOLY MAN-BRUTE, IF HE WERE REALLY INCLINED TO LISTEN--
--WHICH, OF COURSE, HE IS NOT--
--AND THAT, AS WILL QUICKLY BECOME OBVIOUS, IS UNFORTUNATE ALL AROUND!
BLAZES! IT'S THE HULK-- AND HE'S CUTTIN' RIGHT ACROSS OUR PATH!
HIT THE BRAKES ON THIS BUGGY-- FAST!
I'M TRYIN', MAN--BUT WE'LL NEVER STOP IN TIME!

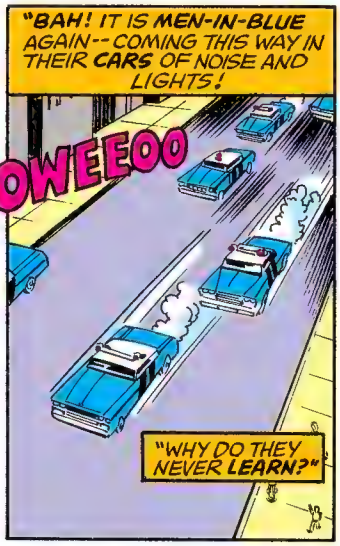
AND WHAT FOLLOWS IS THUS INEVITABLE!
HOLY CRUD! W-WE HIT HIM--!!
PWHAM!
AARRGGHH!!
HUH?
HULK DOESN'T UNDERSTAND! ONE MINUTE, HULK IS WALKING DOWN STREET, AND THE NEXT, HULK IS...
OH.
"BAH! HULK SHOULD HAVE KNOWN! PUNY HUMANS ATTACK HULK AGAIN! PUNY HUMANS IN GIANT MACHINE!"
C'MON, LET'S GET OUTTA HERE!
WE'D HAVE TO BE OUT OF OUR MINDS TO TANGLE WITH THAT OVER-GROWN GORILLA!
RUNNING WILL NOT HELP YOU, LITTLE MEN!
YOU CANNOT ESCAPE FROM HULK!!
HULK IS TIRED OF BEING HOUNDED WHEREVER HULK GOES!
IF PUNY HUMANS ARE GOING TO ATTACK HULK FOR NO REASON--
--THEN PUNY HUMANS ARE GOING TO PAY FOR IT!!
CRIPES! THE FAT IS REALLY IN THE FIRE NOW!
LIKE IT OR NOT, WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO FIGHT!


THEN LET'S SEE HOW THAT UGLY BRUISER LIKES A TASTE OF THE CONCUSSION-CANNON!
PWHOOM
LET'S FINISH HIM!!
STUPID HUMANS! HULK CANNOT BE HURT BY PUNY LITTLE BOMBS!
HULK CANNOT BE HURT BY ANYTHING!
SPWOW!
BUT HULK CAN HURT YOU, LITTLE MEN--
--AND HULK WILL!!
NEVER AGAIN WILL HULK PLEAD WITH PUNY HUMANS TO BE LEFT IN PEACE!
NEVER AGAIN WILL HULK BELIEVE THEIR FILTHY LIES!
RAK!
NO! W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING--?!?
FROM NOW ON, HULK WILL TREAT HUMANS AS HUMANS TREAT HULK--
SKRAK
--STARTING WITH YOU!!
HEY--WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU GUYS GOING?
ABOUT AS FAR FROM HERE AS WE CAN GET!
AND IF YOU GOT ANY BRAINS, BOSS--YOU'LL JOIN US!
WHUNK
BAH! HULK TOLD YOU BEFORE, LITTLE MEN--RUNNING WILL NOT HELP YOU!
THERE IS NOWHERE YOU CAN GO THAT HULK CANNOT FOLLOW!
NOWHERE YOU CAN HIDE THAT HULK CANNOT FIND YOU!!

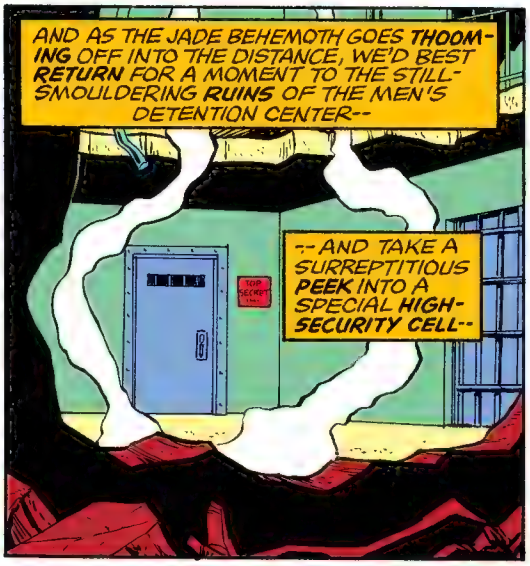
NOTHING YOU CAN DO THAT WILL SAVE YOU FROM HULK'S REVENGE!!
SKRADDA.
KROOM!

SO! PUNY HUMANS ARE NOT DEAD YET--BUT YOU WILL SOON WISH YOU WERE!
HULK WILL MAKE AN EXAMPLE OF YOU, SO THAT OTHER LITTLE MEN WILL NEVER BOTHER HULK AGAIN!

HULK WILL SMASH YOU ALL LIKE...
WEEOWEEOWEEOO
HUH??

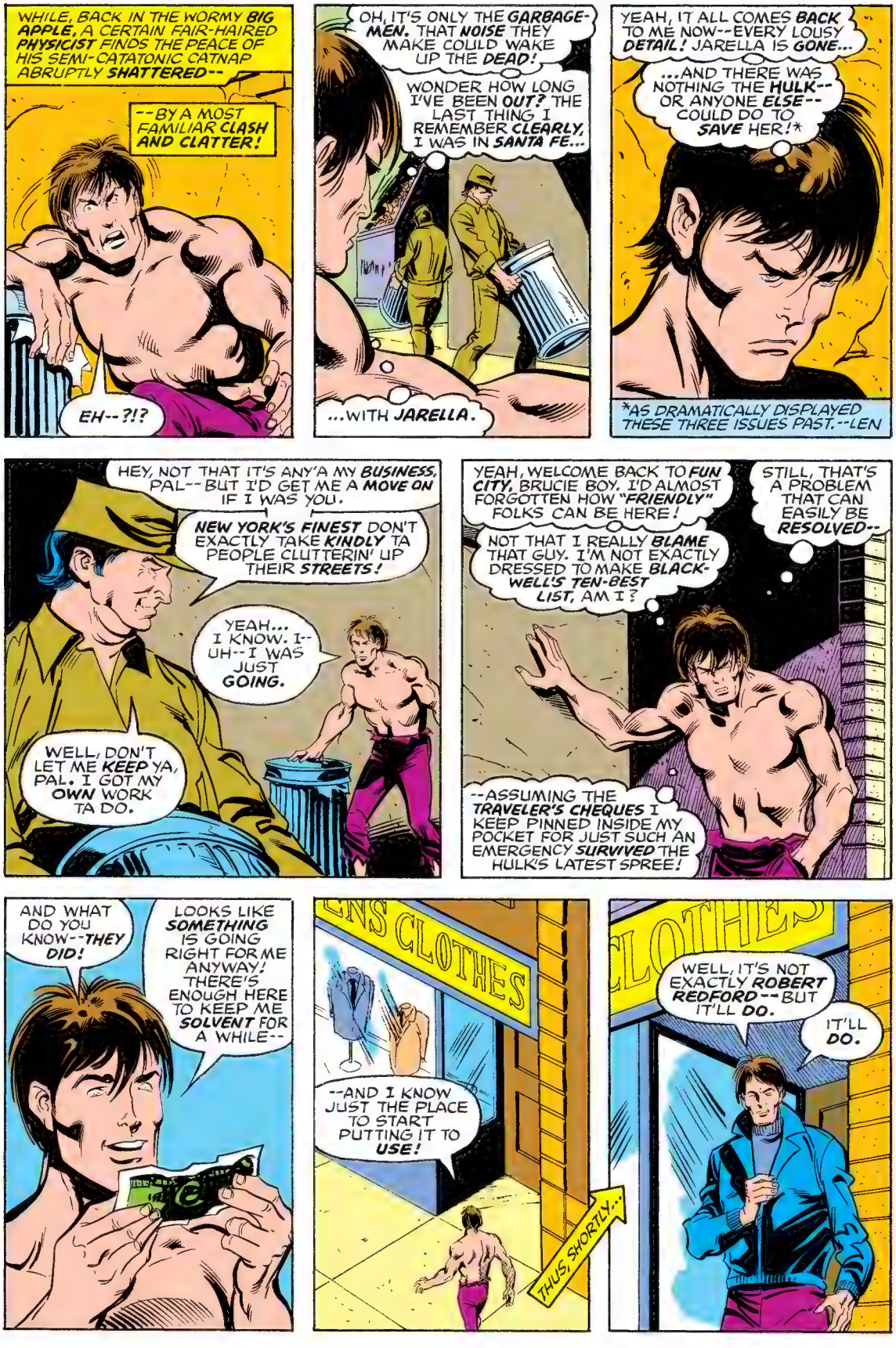

"BAH! IT IS MEN-IN-BLUE AGAIN--COMING THIS WAY IN THEIR CARS OF NOISE AND LIGHTS!
"WHY DO THEY NEVER LEARN?"

HULK COULD STAY AND CRUSH THEM--BUT THAT WOULD SOLVE NOTHING!
OTHER MEN-IN-BLUE WOULD ONLY COME TO TAKE THEIR PLACE!
NO, HULK WILL LEAVE HERE--FIND SOME PLACE WHERE HULK CAN BE ALONE!

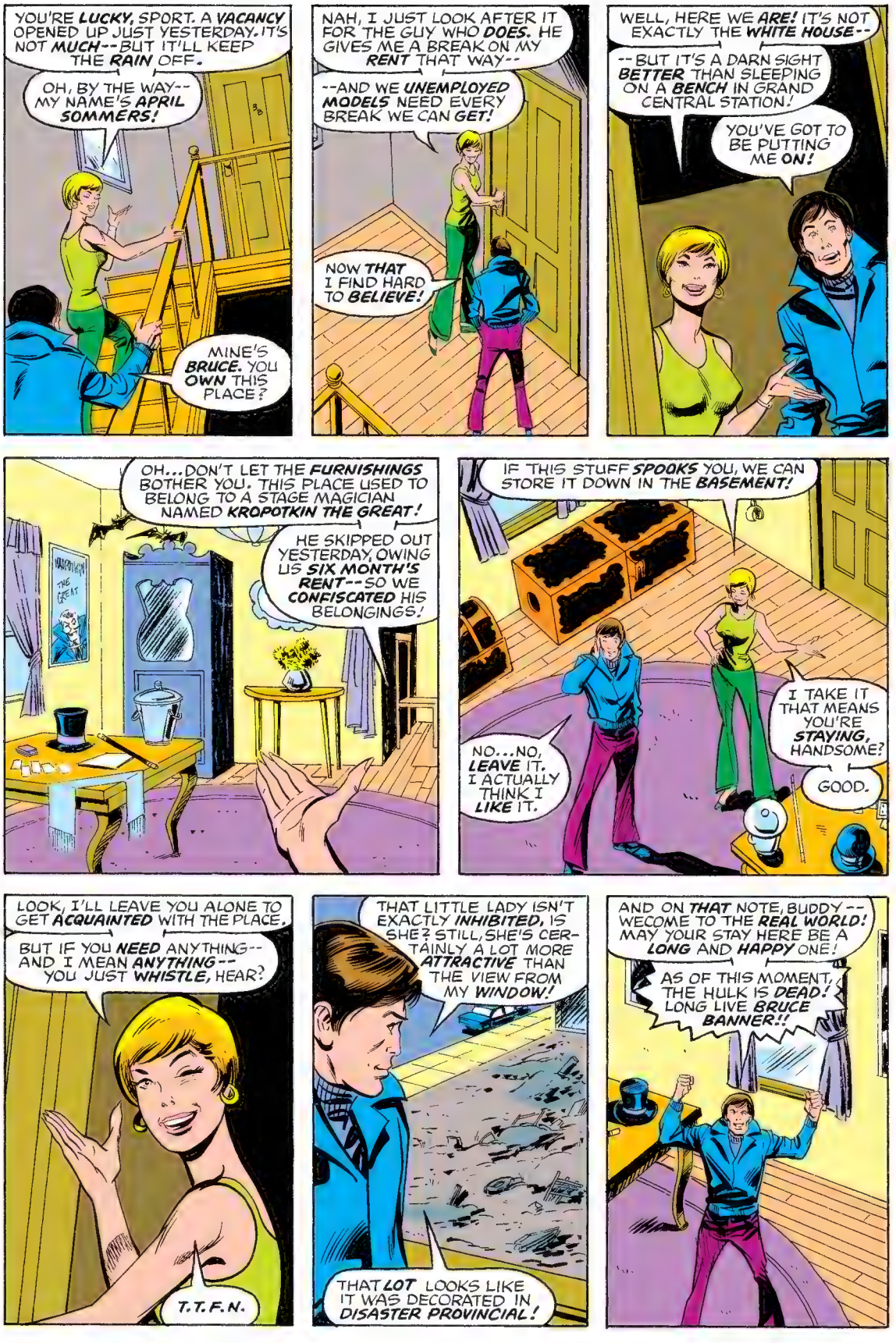

AND AS THE JADE BEHEMOTH GOES THOOMING OFF INTO THE DISTANCE, WE'D BEST RETURN FOR A MOMENT TO THE STILL-SMOULDERING RUINS OF THE MEN'S DETENTION CENTER--
--AND TAKE A SURREPTITIOUS PEEK INTO A SPECIAL HIGH-SECURITY CELL--

--A CELL SEEMINGLY UN-DAMAGED BY THE CONCUSSION-CANNON'S DEVASTATING ASSAULT--
--SAVE FOR A SINGLE CRACKED WATER PIPE--
--THAT SPILLS ITS CONTENTS IN A PER-SISTENT DRIP ACROSS WHAT APPEARS TO BE MERELY AN OVERSIZED CARDBOARD BOX ABOUT THE LENGTH AND BREADTH OF A MAN.
PLIP
PLIP
PLIP
PLIP
PLIP
PLIP
PLIP
INTRIGUING, HUH?
BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, WE CAN'T AFFORD TO SPEND ANY MORE TIME ON OUR MYSTERIOUS BOX FOR THE NONCE--
--SEEING AS HOW THE EVER-INCREDIBLE STAR OF THIS BOOK HAS, AT LAST, REACHED HIS RANDOMLY-CHOSEN DESTINATION!
ALLEY IS NOT MUCH...
...BUT AT LEAST HERE HULK CAN REST FOR A WHILE!
AT LEAST HERE HULK CAN FIND PEACE!
WHICH IS, IN ITS FASHION, TRULY MOST IRONIC--
--FOR THE PEACE THE MAN-BRUTE SO DES-PERATELY CRAVES SERVES ONLY TO SLOW HIS PULSE-RATE--
--CALM HIS NERVES--
--TRANSFORMING HIM ONCE MORE INTO THE ONE PER-SON THE HULK HATES MOST IN ALL THE WORLD--
--DOCTOR ROBERT BRUCE BANNER--
--WHO SLEEPS ON IN UTTER EXHAUSTION--

--WHILE WE TAKE A QUICK SIDE-TRIP 3,000 MILES AWAY, TO AN EQUALLY-FILTHY ALLEYWAY DEEP IN THE LOS ANGELES GHETTO CALLED WATTS...
YOU BEEN PUSHIN' YO' BIG NOSE IN WHERE IT DON'T BELONG, TURKEY--
--SO NOW YO' GONNA BE PUSHIN' UP DAISIES!
SORRY, SUCKER--BUT JIM WILSON AIN'T NOBODY'S TURKEY--
THRAK!
OWWWW!!
UUNNHH!!
CHOK!
I LEARNED ME ENOUGH MOVES WHILE HANGIN' OUT WITH THE HULK TO TAKE ON AN ARMY O' YOU DUDES!
OKAY, JIMBO--SO WHADDAYA DO NOW? THOSE TWO CREEPS AIN'T GONNA BE CHASIN' YA FOR A WHILE--
--BUT THERE'S PLENTY OTHERS WHERE THEY CAME FROM!
WHERE DO YA GO, JIMBO--WHEN YOU RUN OUT OF PLACES TO RUN?
MAYBE I NEVER SHOULD'A GOTTEN INVOLVED IN THIS MESS BUT I OWE IT TO MYSELF TO FIND OUT ABOUT...
HEY--THAT NEWSPAPER HEADLINE!
NEWSTA
FOR A MOMENT, THE YOUNG BLACK MAN PEERS AT THE PAPER, HIS LIPS MOVING IN SILENT DETERMINATION--
--THEN ABRUPTLY, HE WHIRLS--AND RACES OFF DOWN THE STREET!
FOR, IN THAT HEADLINE, JIM WILSON HAS FOUND HIS NEW DIRECTION--AND A NEW PURPOSE AS WELL!
LOS ANGELES TIMES
HULK RUNS AMOK IN NEW YORK CITY
WHAT IS IT THEY SAY ABOUT A FRIEND IN NEED...?


WHILE, BACK IN THE WORMY BIG APPLE, A CERTAIN FAIR-HAIRED PHYSICIST FINDS THE PEACE OF HIS SEMI-CATATONIC CATNAP ABRUPTLY SHATTERED--
--BY A MOST FAMILIAR CLASH AND CLATTER!
EH--?!?
OH, IT'S ONLY THE GARBAGE-MEN. THAT NOISE THEY MAKE COULD WAKE UP THE DEAD!
WONDER HOW LONG I'VE BEEN OUT? THE LAST THING I REMEMBER CLEARLY, I WAS IN SANTA FE...
...WITH JARELLA.
YEAH, IT ALL COMES BACK TO ME NOW--EVERY LOUSY DETAIL! JARELLA IS GONE...
...AND THERE WAS NOTHING THE HULK--OR ANYONE ELSE--COULD DO TO SAVE HER!*
*AS DRAMATICALLY DISPLAYED THESE THREE ISSUES PAST.--LEN
HEY, NOT THAT IT'S ANY'A MY BUSINESS, PAL--BUT I'D GET ME A MOVE ON IF I WAS YOU.
NEW YORK'S FINEST DON'T EXACTLY TAKE KINDLY TA PEOPLE CLUTTERIN' UP THEIR STREETS!
YEAH... I KNOW. I--UH--I WAS JUST GOING.
WELL, DON'T LET ME KEEP YA, PAL. I GOT MY OWN WORK TA DO.
YEAH, WELCOME BACK TO FUN CITY, BRUCIE BOY. I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN HOW "FRIENDLY" FOLKS CAN BE HERE!
NOT THAT I REALLY BLAME THAT GUY. I'M NOT EXACTLY DRESSED TO MAKE BLACKWELL'S TEN-BEST LIST, AM I?
STILL, THAT'S A PROBLEM THAT CAN EASILY BE RESOLVED--
--ASSUMING THE TRAVELER'S CHEQUES I KEEP PINNED INSIDE MY POCKET FOR JUST SUCH AN EMERGENCY SURVIVED THE HULK'S LATEST SPREE!
AND WHAT DO YOU KNOW--THEY DID!
LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING IS GOING RIGHT FOR ME ANYWAY! THERE'S ENOUGH HERE TO KEEP ME SOLVENT FOR A WHILE--
GNS CLOTHES
--AND I KNOW JUST THE PLACE TO START PUTTING IT TO USE!
THUS, SHORTLY...
CLOTHES
WELL, IT'S NOT EXACTLY ROBERT REDFORD--BUT IT'LL DO.
IT'LL DO.

PAWNSHOP
THE QUESTION IS--DO CLOTHES REALLY MAKE THE MAN?
HOW LONG WILL IT BE BEFORE THE MONSTER WITHIN ME TEARS THESE DUDS TO RAGS AS HE'S TORN SO MANY OTHERS?
HOW LONG BEFORE I HAVE TO FACE THE HULK ONCE MORE?
GOD, IT WOULD BE SO SIMPLE TO PUT AN END TO IT FOREVER!
ONE BULLET THRU MY HEAD--THAT'S ALL IT WOULD TAKE--AND THE HULK WOULD NEVER STALK THE WORLD AGAIN!
CHEAP! $17.95
AMMO
AMMO
ONE SIMPLE LITTLE BULLET AND THEN...
NO! DAMN IT, THAT'S NO SOLUTION!
ROBERT BRUCE BANNER HAD FRIENDS--A LIFE--A FUTURE--LONG BEFORE THIS NIGHTMARE BEGAN...
...AND, BY GOD, HE CAN HAVE THEM AGAIN!
THEY'RE NOT LOST--ONLY MISPLACED SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY.
--AND IF I WORK AT IT, I KNOW I CAN FIND THEM!
IF I'M GOING TO PUT MY LIFE BACK TOGETHER, I'LL NEED A PLACE TO STAY, A ROOF OVER MY HEAD--
ROOMS TO LET
--AND THAT LOOKS LIKE AS GOOD A PLACE AS ANY!
ALMOST TIMIDLY, AS IF NORMALITY WERE SOMEHOW TOO MUCH TO HOPE FOR, DR. ROBERT BRUCE BANNER PRESSES THE WAITING DOOR BUZZER--
BZZZZ! BZZZZ!
--AND HIS BRAND-NEW LIFE GETS OFF TO A ROLLICKING START!
HOWDY, HANDSOME.
SOMETHING I CAN DO YOU FOR?
WELL, I--AH--SAW THE SIGN HANGING OUT IN FRONT AND...
SAY NO MORE, SEXY. JUST FOLLOW ME!
NOW THAT'S THE NICEST OFFER I'VE HEARD ALL DAY!


YOU'RE LUCKY, SPORT. A VACANCY OPENED UP JUST YESTERDAY. IT'S NOT MUCH--BUT IT'LL KEEP THE RAIN OFF.
OH, BY THE WAY--MY NAME'S APRIL SOMMERS!
MINE'S BRUCE. YOU OWN THIS PLACE?
NAH, I JUST LOOK AFTER IT FOR THE GUY WHO DOES. HE GIVES ME A BREAK ON MY RENT THAT WAY--
--AND WE UNEMPLOYED MODELS NEED EVERY BREAK WE CAN GET!
NOW THAT I FIND HARD TO BELIEVE!
WELL, HERE WE ARE! IT'S NOT EXACTLY THE WHITE HOUSE--
--BUT IT'S A DARN SIGHT BETTER THAN SLEEPING ON A BENCH IN GRAND CENTRAL STATION!
YOU'VE GOT TO BE PUTTING ME ON!
OH...DON'T LET THE FURNISHINGS BOTHER YOU. THIS PLACE USED TO BELONG TO A STAGE MAGICIAN NAMED KROPOTKIN THE GREAT!
HE SKIPPED OUT YESTERDAY, OWING US SIX MONTH'S RENT--SO WE CONFISCATED HIS BELONGINGS!
IF THIS STUFF SPOOKS YOU, WE CAN STORE IT DOWN IN THE BASEMENT!
NO...NO, LEAVE IT. I ACTUALLY THINK I LIKE IT.
I TAKE IT THAT MEANS YOU'RE STAYING, HANDSOME?
GOOD.
LOOK, I'LL LEAVE YOU ALONE TO GET ACQUAINTED WITH THE PLACE.
BUT IF YOU NEED ANYTHING--AND I MEAN ANYTHING--YOU JUST WHISTLE, HEAR?
T.T.F.N.
THAT LITTLE LADY ISN'T EXACTLY INHIBITED, IS SHE? STILL, SHE'S CERTAINLY A LOT MORE ATTRACTIVE THAN THE VIEW FROM MY WINDOW!
THAT LOT LOOKS LIKE IT WAS DECORATED IN DISASTER PROVINCIAL!
AND ON THAT NOTE, BUDDY--WECOME TO THE REAL WORLD! MAY YOUR STAY HERE BE A LONG AND HAPPY ONE!
AS OF THIS MOMENT, THE HULK IS DEAD! LONG LIVE BRUCE BANNER!!

WHILE, AT THE ISOLATED NEW MEXICAN PARA-MILITARY INSTALLATION CODE-NAMED GAMMA BASE...
AH--SO THERE YOU, MAJOR TALBOT! I'VE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU!
SO NOW YOU'VE FOUND ME, GENERAL ROSS. CONGRATULATIONS.
DID IT EVER DAWN ON YOU THAT MAYBE YOU HAD TO LOOK SO HARD FOR ME BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO BE FOUND?
LISTEN, MY BOY--I'VE SPOKEN TO BETTY. I KNOW ALL ABOUT THE PROBLEMS YOU TWO HAVE BEEN EXPERI-ENCING LATELY.*
MAYBE IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS, GLENN--BUT I FEEL THAT YOU AND I OUGHT TO TALK ABOUT IT.
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME, GENERAL?
*AND SO DO YOU, IF YOU'VE BEEN READING THE PAST FEW ISSUES. --LEN.
YOU'RE RIGHT, GENERAL...
OF COURSE, I'M RIGHT, IT'S...
IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!
IF I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU, DON'T YOU THINK I'D HAVE COME TO YOU? WHY DO YOU PEOPLE PERSIST IN BADGERING ME?
WHY CAN'T YOU LEAVE ME ALONE!?!
WHY, I...I...
DO YOU TWO WANT TO STOP STANDING THERE WITH YOUR JAWS HANGING OUT AND LEND ME A HAND?
WHO--?!?
YOU--!!
SWELL, THAT'S ALL I NEEDED--PSYCHIATRIST-CUM-SUPER-HERO, DOC SAMSON!
GOOD LORD, SAMSON--THAT'S A MAN YOU'RE CARRYING! BUT WHERE--?!?
HE CAME STAGGERING IN OUT OF THE DESERT, GENERAL--AND COLLAPSED AT MY FEET!
LOOKS LIKE HE'S BEEN OUT THERE FOR WEEKS--WHICH POSES AN INTERESTING QUESTION.
SINCE THERE IS NOTHING AT ALL OUT IN THAT DESERT FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES AROUND--
--WHERE IN BLAZES DID THIS GUY COME FROM??

AND AS A NEW MYSTERY BEGINS TO BREW AT GAMMA BASE, LET'S BOUNCE BACK TO THE MEN'S DETENTION CENTER AND LOOK IN ON A MYSTERY WE NOTED EARLIER THIS ISSUE...
BETTER CHECK ON THE CONTENTS OF THAT CELL!
...SPECIFICALLY, A RATHER PECULIAR CARDBOARD BOX...
HOLY JOE!?!
...A BOX THAT HAS DEFINITELY SUFFERED FROM THE PERSISTANT ASSAULT OF THAT LONELY, LEAKING WATER PIPE!
THE BLASTED BOX IS EMPTY!!
MAN-OH-MAN! THE WARDEN'LL HAVE OUR HEADS FOR THIS! HE WARNED US HOW DANGEROUS THAT GUY COULD BE!
LET'S CHECK OUT THE CELL! MAYBE HE'S STILL IN HERE!
YA'D BETTER BELIEVE I'M STILL HERE, YA MEALY-MOUTHED MORONS--BUT I AIN'T GONNA BE FER LONG!
THERE HE IS--BEHIND THE DOOR!
BUT LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HIM!!
WHADDA YOU MUGS STARIN' AT?
AIN'T YA NEVER SEEN THE ABSORBING MAN BEFORE??
I WARNED THAT CRUMMY THOR NO ROTTEN CARDBOARD BOX WUZ GONNA HOLD CRUSHER CREEL--AN' I MEANT IT!
JUST S-STAY RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE, MISTER!
DON'T FORCE US TO SHOOT YOU!!

YOU PUNKS HAVE GOTTA BE KIDDIN'!!
PWHAMM!
HOW D'YA FIGGER TA SHOOT A GUY WHO'S MADE OUTTA SOLID STEEL!
THERE YA GO--AS GOOD AS NEW! YOU'D NEVER KNOW A CANNON HAD BLOWN A BIG HOLE IN THAT WALL!
FACE IT, MORRIS K. GOLDSTEIN--YER A REAL AR-TEEST!
OUTTA MY WAY, SUCKERS!
CRUSHER CREEL IS BUSTIN' OUTTA THIS SARDINE CAN!!
OH--NO!!
KRAM!
M-M-M-MY WALL! LOOK WHAT THAT MANIAC DID TO MY BRAND-NEW WALL!!
OY, MORRIS--YOU SHOULD'A STAYED IN THE GEFILTE FISH BUSINESS LIKE YOUR MOTHER WANTED YA TO!
AND IF YOU THINK YOU SHOULD BE IN ANOTHER LINE OF WORK, MORRIS--IMAGINE HOW THE EVER-READY N.Y.P.D. FEELS AT THE MOMENT!
I'M WARNIN' YOU TURKEYS--BACK OFF!
SKRAKK!
BACK OFF--OR I'LL BUST YA TA PIECES!
THIS IS FRED CRAMER, FOR ON-THE-SPOT NEWS! WHILE HERE AT THE MEN'S DETENTION CENTER, REPORTING ON THIS AFTERNOON'S BREAK-IN, WE HAVE BEEN WITNESS TO A STARTLING NEW DEVELOPMENT!
CRUSHER CREEL--ALIAS THE UNCANNY ABSORBING MAN--HAS BROKEN JAIL RIGHT BEFORE OUR ON-THE-SPOT CAMERAS--AND IS CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN MORTAL COMBAT WITH THE NEW YORK CITY POLICE!
MOBILE TV
WERG

AS SOME OF YOU MAY RECALL, CRUSHER CREEL WAS CAPTURED RECENTLY BY THE AVENGER CALLED THOR,* SELF-PROCLAIMED INCARNATION OF THE NORSE THUNDER GOD...
MAN, IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I HAD MY OWN PLACE, I ALMOST DON'T KNOW HOW TO HANDLE IT.
AS DETAILED IN THOR #236.--LEN.
MIGHT AS WELL GO OUT AND GET TO KNOW THE NEIGHBORHOOD, THEN...
HEY, BRUCE-- COME TAKE A LOOK AT THIS!
WHAT IS IT, APRIL? STARSKY PICKING ON HUTCH AGAIN?
I ONLY WISH THAT'S ALL IT WAS, HANDSOME --LOOK!
IN SOME UNKNOWN FASHION, CREEL IS ABLE TO ABSORB THE STRONGEST PROPERTIES OF ANYTHING HE TOUCHES, THUS TRANSFORMING HIMSELF INTO A LIVING ENGINE OF DESTRUCTION...
HOLY CROW!
PARIS
LORD, IT'S BEEN MONTHS SINCE HE AND I LAST CLASHED*--BUT I'D RECOGNIZE THAT BULLET HEAD, THAT ARROGANT SNEER ANYWHERE!
THE ABSORBING MAN IS LOOSE AGAIN--
--AND THIS TIME, HE MAY BRING THE ENTIRE CITY TO ITS KNEES!
* WAY BACK IN HULK #125, RIGHT?--LEN AGAIN.
Y' KNOW, I'M GLAD THEM TV GUYS ARE FILMIN' THIS--
--SO'S I CAN SHOW THE WHOLE LOUSY COUNTRY WHAT'LL HAPPEN TA ANYONE WHO GETS IN MY WAY!!
NO! THE EXCITEMENT MUST BE GETTING TO ME--! MY PULSE HAS STARTED RACING--I'M BREAKING OUT IN A SWEAT--!
MUSTN'T CHANGE-- NOT WITH APRIL HERE! MUSTN'T EVER CHANGE AGAIN!
CALM DOWN, BANNER! BLAST IT-- KEEP CALM !!

BUT WHILE ROBERT BRUCE BANNER FIGHTS A DESPERATE INNER BATTLE, A FAR MORE OBVIOUS BATTLE HAS SUDDENLY TAKEN A TURN FOR THE WORST!
OKAY, MEN--BRING UP THE HEAVY ARTILLERY!
KROOM!
WE CAN'T AFFORD TO LET THAT MONSTER GET AWAY!!
CAREFUL, CASEY! MAKE CERTAIN YOU'VE GOT YOUR SHOT LINED UP BEFORE YOU FIRE!
WE WON'T GET A SECOND CHANCE AT THIS!
YOU JUST SAY WHEN, SARGE--AND I'LL TAKE HIM!
YEAH, C'MON, YA TRIGGER-HAPPY TURKEYS--FIRE YER BLASTED BAZOOKA AT ME!
I'LL ABSORB THE FORCE OF THE EXPLOSION--AND TURN IT RIGHT BACK AT YA!
C'MON ALREADY, SO'S I CAN... HUH?
F-FEEL SO STRANGE ALL OF A SUDDEN--!?
WHAT'S HAPPENIN' TO MEEEEEEEEEE
JUMPING JUDAS! H-HE'S GONE!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND--! HOW COULD CREEL VANISH LIKE THAT--WITH HALF THE NEW YORK POLICE FORCE SURROUNDING HIM?
AND WHILE WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT, HANDSOME--WHERE THE DEVIL DID HE GO??

AND YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WONDERING THAT, MS. SOMMERS...
WH-WHERE AM I? WH-WHAT'S GOIN' ON?
AN' WHY AM I SUDDENLY WEARIN' THIS SISSY OUFIT?
WE MERELY GARBED YOU IN ATTIRE MORE BEFITTING YOUR MOST REMARKABLE ABILITIES, CRUSHER CREEL!
HUH?
WH-WHO ARE YOU?!?
WE ARE THEY WHO WIELD POWER, ABSORBING MAN--!
THEY WHO RESCUED YOU FROM YOUR RATHER UNTENABLE SITUATION!
WELL, IF YER EXPECTIN' THANKS--FERGET IT! THERE AIN'T NOBODY WHAT DOES SOMETHIN' FER NOTHIN'!
SO WHADDA YOU CREEPS FIGGER ON GETTIN' OUTTA ME?
YOU DO NOT MINCE WORDS, CRUSHER CREEL--THAT IS GOOD! THUS, GAZE INTO THE GLITTERING GLOBE SUSPENDED BEFORE YOU--
--AND ALL WILL SWIFTLY BECOME CLEAR!
BEHOLD THE MONSTROUS MAN-BRUTE CALLED THE INCREDIBLE HULK!
FOR REASONS OF OUR OWN, WE WISH TO SEE THIS CREATURE DEAD-- AND WE HAVE CHOSEN YOU TO BE THE INSTRUMENT OF HIS DEMISE!
YA MEAN YA WANT ME TA KILL THAT GREEN GORILLA? WHY DIDN'T YA SAY SO INNA FIRST PLACE?
FELLAS, YOU GOT YERSELVES A DEAL!
NEXT ISSUE:
MORE OF THE BRAND-NEW LIFE OF BRUCE BANNER! PLUS, ACTION LIKE YOU'VE RARELY DREAMED POSSIBLE! ALL THIS AND MORE, IN THE SHOCKING SAGA WE CALL...
SLAUGHTER ABOVE THE STREETS!
BE HERE!

INCREDIBLE HULK
MARVEL® COMICS GROUP
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
209
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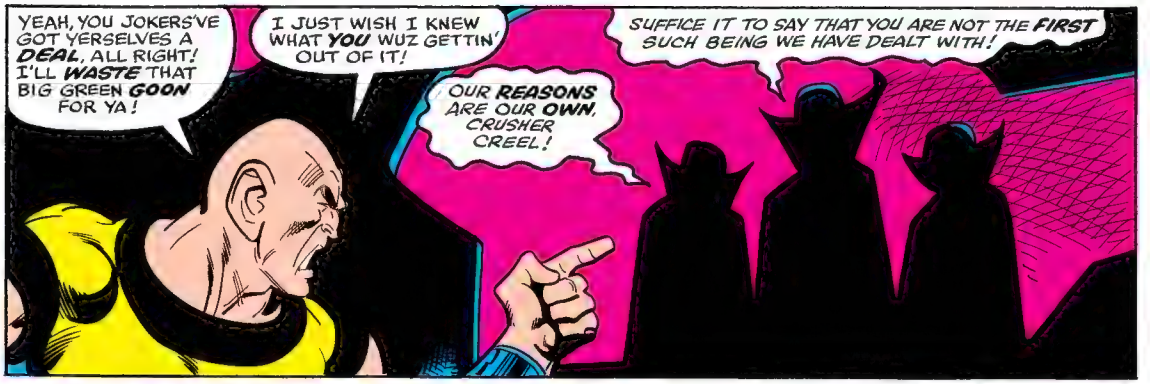
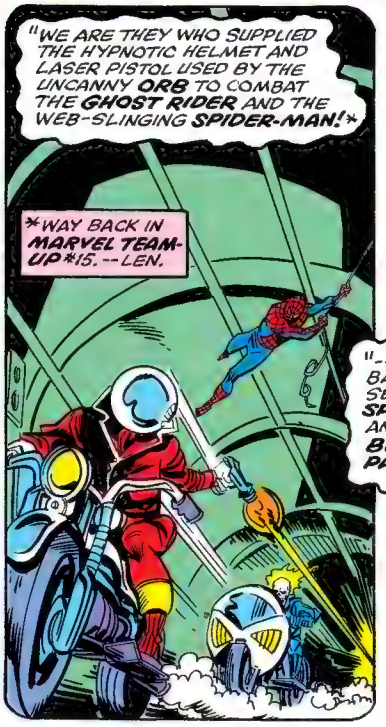
02456
THE INCREDIBLE HULK®
C. 1976 MARVEL COMICS GROUP
THE ABSORBING MAN HAS COME BACK FOR REVENGE!!
AND WHAT CRUSHER CREEL WANTS, HE GETS!!

Caught in the heart of a ***Nuclear Explosion,*** victim of ***Gamma-Radiation*** gone wild, ***Doctor Robert Bruce Banner*** now finds himself transformed in times of stress into seven feet, one thousand pounds of unfettered ***Fury***—the most powerful creature to ever walk the earth—

STAN LEE PRESENTS: THE INCREDIBLE HULK!™

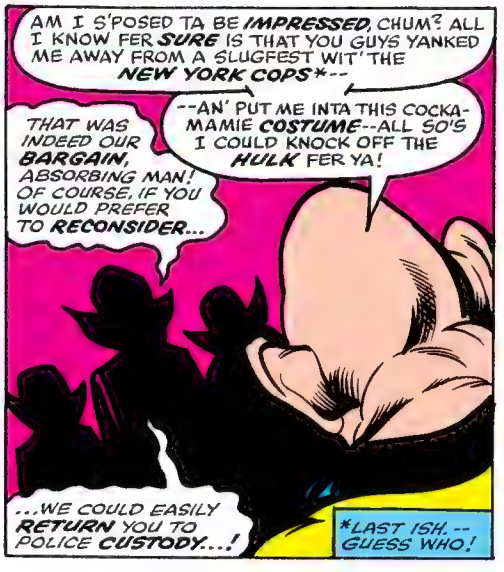
LEN WEIN: WRITER/EDITOR ✳ SAL BUSCEMA & JOE STATON: ILLUSTRATORS ✳ GLYNIS WEIN COLORIST ✳ JOE ROSEN LETTERER

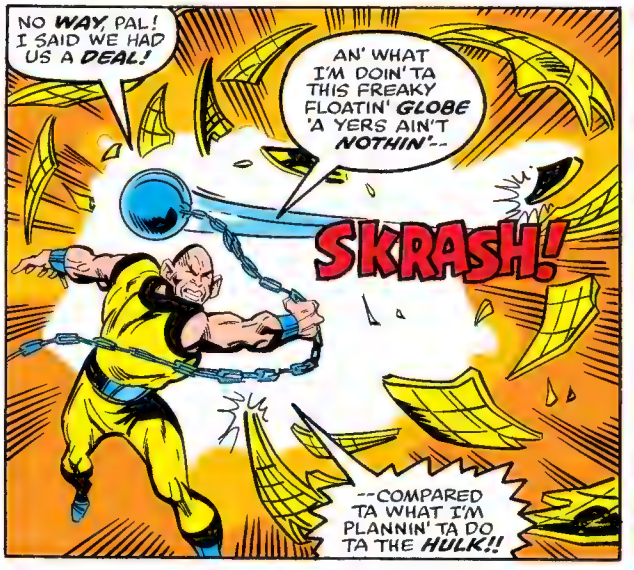

YEAH, YOU JOKERS'VE GOT YERSELVES A DEAL, ALL RIGHT! I'LL WASTE THAT BIG GREEN GOON FOR YA!
I JUST WISH I KNEW WHAT YOU WUZ GETTIN' OUT OF IT!
OUR REASONS ARE OUR OWN, CRUSHER CREEL!
SUFFICE IT TO SAY THAT YOU ARE NOT THE FIRST SUCH BEING WE HAVE DEALT WITH!

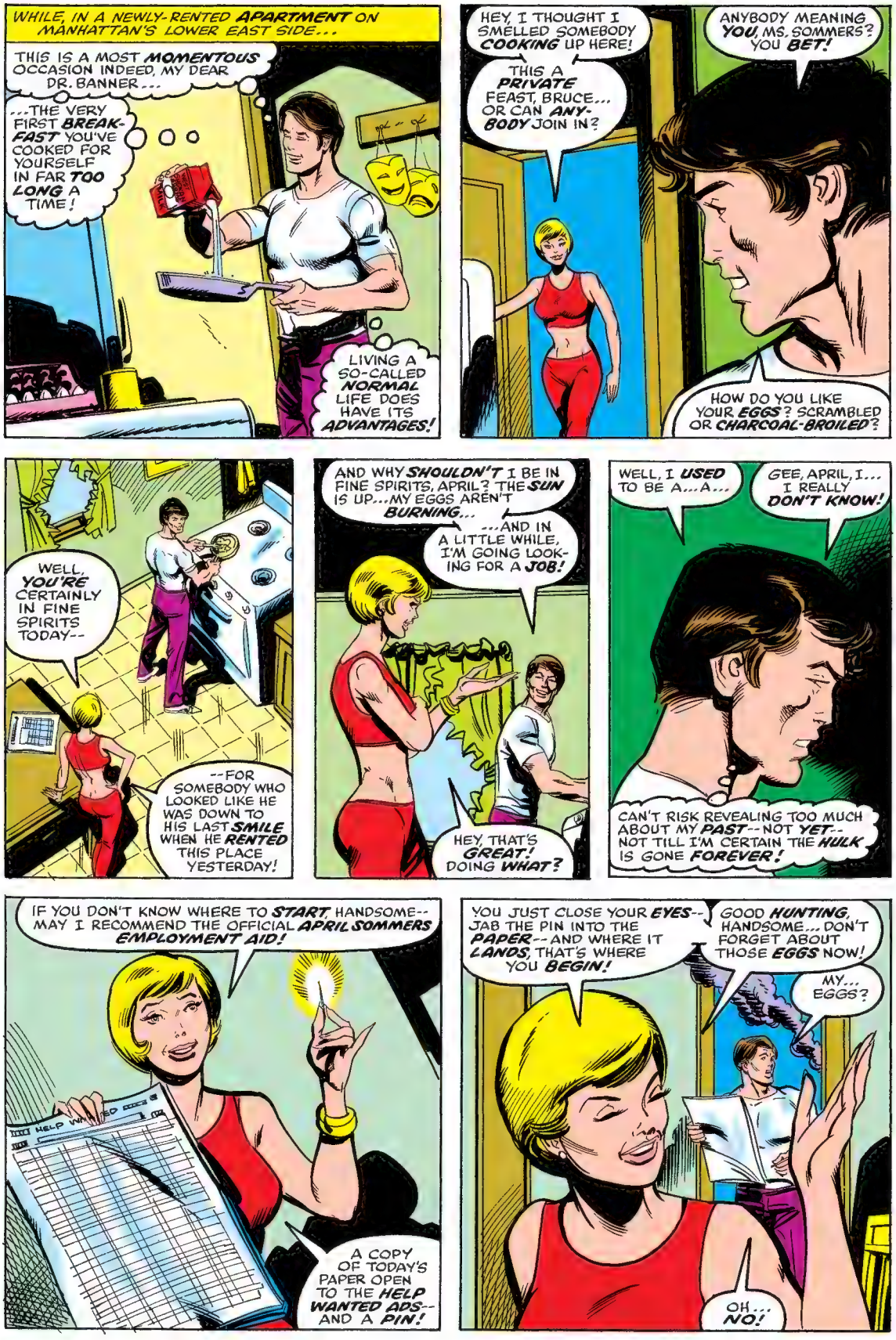

"WE ARE THEY WHO SUPPLIED THE HYPNOTIC HELMET AND LASER PISTOL USED BY THE UNCANNY ORB TO COMBAT THE GHOST RIDER AND THE WEB-SLINGING SPIDER-MAN!*
*WAY BACK IN MARVEL TEAM-UP #15. --LEN.

"JUST AS WE PROVIDED THE FLYING ARK UTILIZED BY STEGRON THE DINOSAUR MAN--
"--WHEN HE BATTLED THAT SELFSAME SPIDER-MAN AND THE BLACK PANTHER!*
*IN TEAM-UP #20.-- LEN AGAIN.

"SO TOO DID WE INSTIGATE THE REVOLT OF THE LAVA MEN THAT WAS THWARTED BY THE MIGHTY THOR AND THE HOT-HEADED HUMAN TORCH!*"
*IN TEAM-UP #26. --STILL LEN.


AM I S'POSED TA BE IMPRESSED, CHUM? ALL I KNOW FER SURE IS THAT YOU GUYS YANKED ME AWAY FROM A SLUGFEST WIT' THE NEW YORK COPS*--
--AN' PUT ME INTA THIS COCKAMAMIE COSTUME--ALL SO'S I COULD KNOCK OFF THE HULK FER YA!
THAT WAS INDEED OUR BARGAIN, ABSORBING MAN! OF COURSE, IF YOU WOULD PREFER TO RECONSIDER...
...WE COULD EASILY RETURN YOU TO POLICE CUSTODY...!
*LAST ISH. -- GUESS WHO!

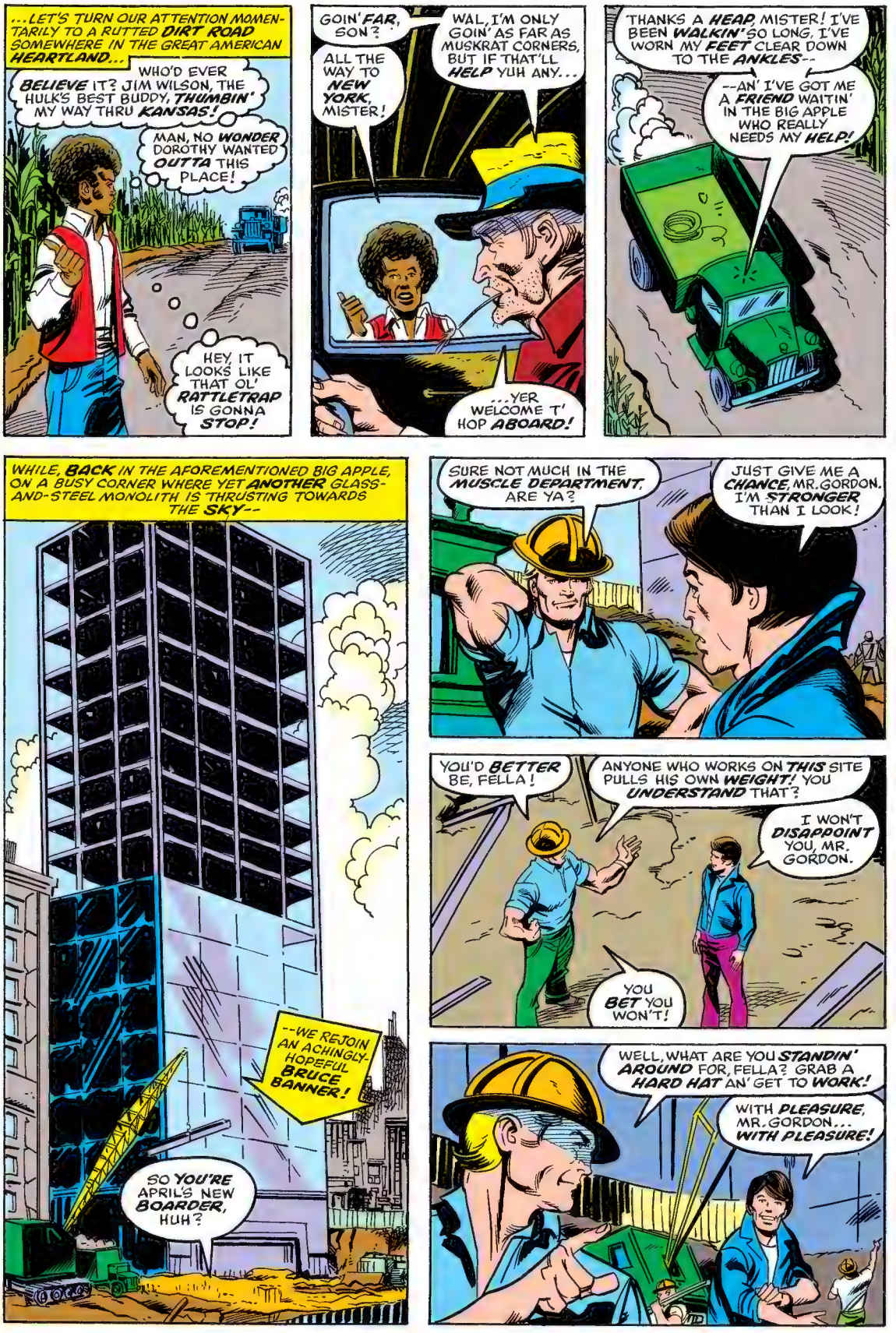

NO WAY, PAL! I SAID WE HAD US A DEAL!
AN' WHAT I'M DOIN' TA THIS FREAKY FLOATIN' GLOBE 'A YERS AIN'T NOTHIN'--
SKRASH!
--COMPARED TA WHAT I'M PLANNIN' TA DO TA THE HULK!!


WHILE, IN A NEWLY-RENTED APARTMENT ON MANHATTAN'S LOWER EAST SIDE...
THIS IS A MOST MOMENTOUS OCCASION INDEED, MY DEAR DR. BANNER...
...THE VERY FIRST BREAK-FAST YOU'VE COOKED FOR YOURSELF IN FAR TOO LONG A TIME!
LIVING A SO-CALLED NORMAL LIFE DOES HAVE ITS ADVANTAGES!
HEY, I THOUGHT I SMELLED SOMEBODY COOKING UP HERE!
THIS A PRIVATE FEAST, BRUCE... OR CAN ANY-BODY JOIN IN?
ANYBODY MEANING YOU, MS. SOMMERS? YOU BET!
HOW DO YOU LIKE YOUR EGGS? SCRAMBLED OR CHARCOAL-BROILED?
WELL, YOU'RE CERTAINLY IN FINE SPIRITS TODAY--
--FOR SOMEBODY WHO LOOKED LIKE HE WAS DOWN TO HIS LAST SMILE WHEN HE RENTED THIS PLACE YESTERDAY!
AND WHY SHOULDN'T I BE IN FINE SPIRITS, APRIL? THE SUN IS UP...MY EGGS AREN'T BURNING...
...AND IN A LITTLE WHILE, I'M GOING LOOK-ING FOR A JOB!
HEY, THAT'S GREAT! DOING WHAT?
WELL, I USED TO BE A...A...
GEE, APRIL, I... I REALLY DON'T KNOW!
CAN'T RISK REVEALING TOO MUCH ABOUT MY PAST--NOT YET--NOT TILL I'M CERTAIN THE HULK IS GONE FOREVER!
IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START, HANDSOME--MAY I RECOMMEND THE OFFICIAL APRIL SOMMERS EMPLOYMENT AID!
HELP WANTED ADS
A COPY OF TODAY'S PAPER OPEN TO THE HELP WANTED ADS--AND A PIN!
YOU JUST CLOSE YOUR EYES--JAB THE PIN INTO THE PAPER--AND WHERE IT LANDS, THAT'S WHERE YOU BEGIN!
GOOD HUNTING, HANDSOME... DON'T FORGET ABOUT THOSE EGGS NOW!
MY... EGGS?
OH... NO!

SEVERAL TIME-ZONES AWAY, THE SUN IS JUST RISING OVER THE SEMI-SECRET PARA-MILITARY INSTALLATION CALLED GAMMA BASE--
--AND A WEARY MAJOR GLENN TALBOT IS THERE TO GREET THE MORNING...
...ALONE!
BUT NOT ALONE FOR VERY LONG!
OH...BETTY, I DIDN'T WAKE YOU, DID I? I TRIED TO BE QUIET WHEN I LEFT.
I WAS PROBABLY AWAKE BEFORE YOU WERE, GLENN. I WATCHED YOU GET DRESSED AND COME OUT HERE.
I JUST THOUGHT I'D JOIN YOU.
IT'S BEAUTIFUL, ISN'T IT? THE SUNRISE, I MEAN.
SOME PEOPLE GO THRU THEIR ENTIRE LIVES WITHOUT EVER NOTICING IT.
SOME PEOPLE GO THRU THEIR LIVES WITHOUT EVER NOTICING ANYTHING, DARLING.
SOME PEOPLE ARE BLIND BY CHOICE.
DO YOU MEAN US, BETTY? ARE WE BEING BLIND?
ARE WE REFUSING TO SEE THE TRUTH LAID OUT BEFORE US?
IT...IT'S NOT WORKING, IS IT?
OUR MARRIAGE JUST ISN'T WORKING!
NO, SWEETHEART... I DON'T THINK IT IS! I'VE TRIED, BETTY-- GOD, HOW I'VE TRIED-- BUT I JUST CAN'T FORGET WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME!
I CAN'T FORGIVE MYSELF FOR ALL THE GRIEF I'VE GIVEN YOU WHEN ALL I WANTED TO GIVE YOU WAS MY LOVE!
SO WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE US?
NOWHERE, BETTY... AT LEAST FOR NOW!
THEN WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, GLENN?
I THINK I'LL GO AWAY FOR A WHILE-- TRY TO FIND MYSELF! THAT'S THE PROPER CLICHÉ, ISN'T IT? TRYING TO "FIND" ONESELF?
I'VE JUST GOT TO HAVE SOME TIME ALONE TO TRY TO PUT THE PIECES BACK TOGETHER!
AND WHAT WILL YOU DO, BETTY?
I... I GUESS I'LL COME HELP YOU PACK.

THERE IS PROBABLY NOTHING MORE DISHEARTENING THAN SEEKING GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK--
EMPLOYMENT AGENCY
--ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE A ONCE-PROMINENT NUCLEAR PHYSICIST WHO'S STRUGGLING DESPERATELY TO KEEP YOUR PAST A SECRET!
YOU'RE EITHER UNACCREDITED...
SORRY, FELLA, BUT WITHOUT MORE BACK-GROUND INFORMATION ON YOU--WELL, THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO!
...OR UNAUTHORIZED...
DIDN'T YA SEE THE SIGN, MAC? 'LESS YA GOT A UNION CARD, YA'D BETTER TAKE A WALK!
UNIO
SHOP
...OR UNINTERESTED...
HERE'S ONE FOR A BOUNCER AT THE CONTINENTAL BATHS!
NAH--SOMEHOW I DON'T THINK THAT'S FOR ME!
...OR UNACCEPTABLE...
IF WE DEVELOP ANY OPENINGS, WE'LL--AH--CALL YOU!
HELP WANTED
...OR SIMPLY UNWELCOME!
REALLY, MY GOOD MAN! YOU HAVE TO BE JOKING!

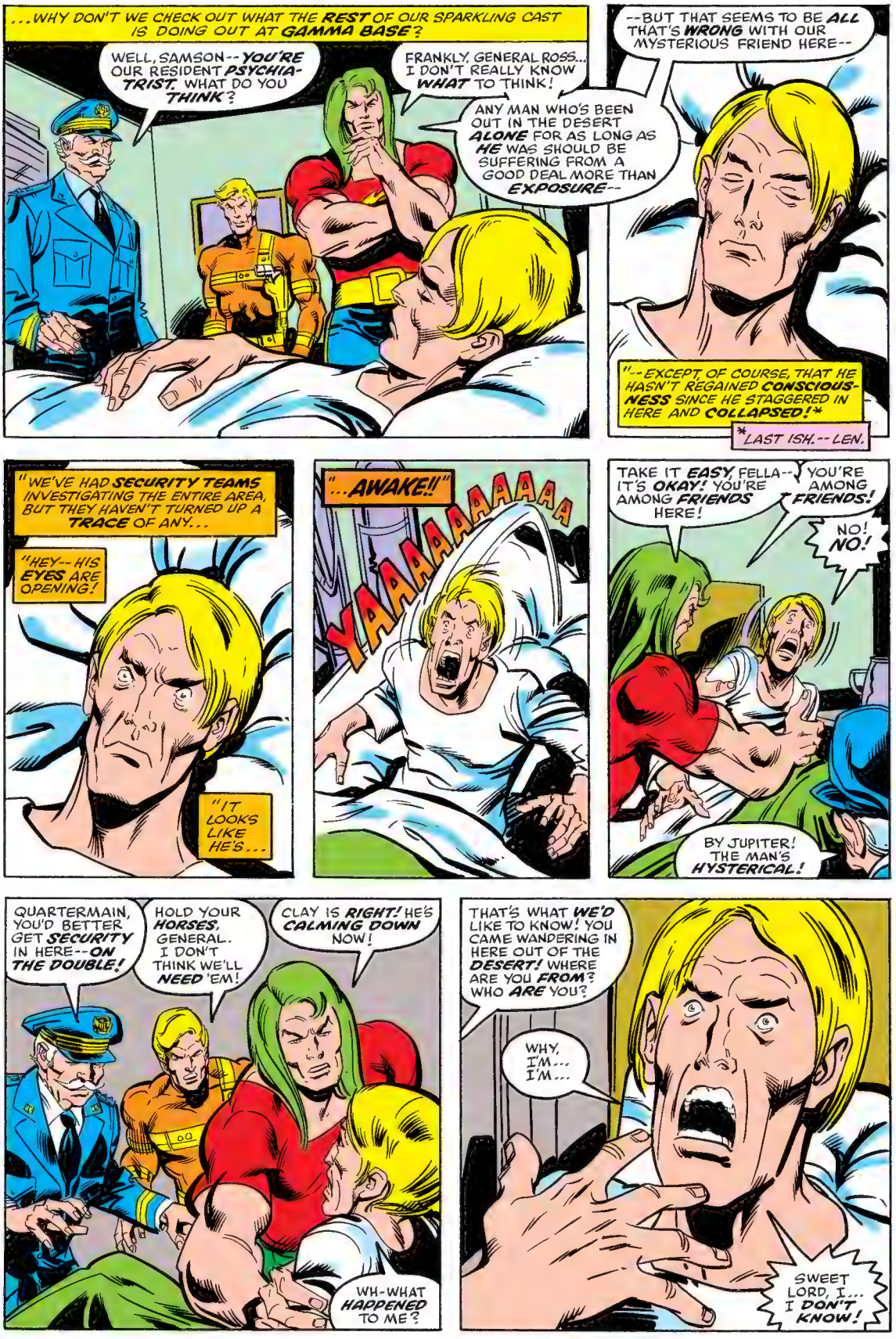
THUS, IT IS A MOST DEJECTED ROBERT BRUCE BANNER WHO RETURNS TO HIS APARTMENT LATER THIS SAME MORNING...
LET ME GUESS. FROM THAT LOOK ON YOUR FACE, YOU'VE EITHER GOTTEN A JOB AS A PROFESSIONAL MOURNER...
...OR YOU DIDN'T GET ANY JOB AT ALL!
IT'S THE MOST FRUSTRATING THING IN THE WORLD, APRIL! IT'S NOT AS IF I DON'T WANT TO WORK!
IT'S JUST THAT NOBODY WILL GIVE ME A CHANCE!
I GUESS IT'S JUST A MATTER OF KNOWING THE RIGHT PEOPLE, BRUCE--
--WHICH IS WHY, WHILE YOU WERE OUT, I GOT IN TOUCH WITH AN OLD FRIEND OF MINE, AND TOLD HIM ABOUT YOU.
NOW WHAT IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
WELL, HE'S NOT PROMISING ANYTHING, MIND YOU-- BUT IF YOU GET ON OVER TO A CERTAIN CONSTRUCTION SITE ON THE WEST SIDE...
...YOU MIGHT JUST FIND YOURSELF WORKING!
APRIL, YOU'RE AN ANGEL!
IF THIS WORKS OUT, PRETTY LADY, I'M TAKING YOU OUT FOR THE BEST STEAK DINNER MY FIRST WEEK'S SALARY WILL BUY!
AND YOU'D BETTER BELIEVE I'LL HOLD YOU TO THAT, GOOD-LOOKING!
NOW THAT IS ONE VERY SPECIAL LADY! SHE'S KNOWN ME FOR 24 HOURS-- AND ALREADY SHE'S SAVING MY LIFE!
YEP, I'M GOING TO HAVE TO GET TO KNOW MS. APRIL SOMMERS BETTER!
WELL, I'LL BE-- THERE HE IS-- JUST LIKE "THEY" TOLD ME HE'D BE WHEN THEY ZAPPED ME BACK OUT ONTA THE STREET!
I COULD FINISH 'IM NOW WIT'OUT BLINKIN'-- BUT THE TIME AIN'T RIGHT!
WHEN I KNOCK OFF THAT PANTYWAIST'S BIG GREEN ALTER EGO, I WANT THE WHOLE BLASTED WORLD TO BE WATCHIN'!
AND ON THAT RATHER MELODRAMATIC NOTE...


...LET'S TURN OUR ATTENTION MOMENTARILY TO A RUTTED DIRT ROAD SOMEWHERE IN THE GREAT AMERICAN HEARTLAND...
WHO'D EVER BELIEVE IT? JIM WILSON, THE HULK'S BEST BUDDY, THUMBIN' MY WAY THRU KANSAS!
MAN, NO WONDER DOROTHY WANTED OUTTA THIS PLACE!
HEY, IT LOOKS LIKE THAT OL' RATTLETRAP IS GONNA STOP!
GOIN' FAR, SON?
ALL THE WAY TO NEW YORK, MISTER!
WAL, I'M ONLY GOIN' AS FAR AS MUSKRAT CORNERS, BUT IF THAT'LL HELP YUH ANY...
...YER WELCOME T' HOP ABOARD!
THANKS A HEAP, MISTER! I'VE BEEN WALKIN' SO LONG, I'VE WORN MY FEET CLEAR DOWN TO THE ANKLES--
--AN' I'VE GOT ME A FRIEND WAITIN' IN THE BIG APPLE WHO REALLY NEEDS MY HELP!
WHILE, BACK IN THE AFOREMENTIONED BIG APPLE, ON A BUSY CORNER WHERE YET ANOTHER GLASS-AND-STEEL MONOLITH IS THRUSTING TOWARDS THE SKY--
--WE REJOIN AN ACHINGLY-HOPEFUL BRUCE BANNER!
SO YOU'RE APRIL'S NEW BOARDER, HUH?
SURE NOT MUCH IN THE MUSCLE DEPARTMENT, ARE YA?
JUST GIVE ME A CHANCE, MR. GORDON. I'M STRONGER THAN I LOOK!
YOU'D BETTER BE, FELLA!
ANYONE WHO WORKS ON THIS SITE PULLS HIS OWN WEIGHT! YOU UNDERSTAND THAT?
I WON'T DISAPPOINT YOU, MR. GORDON.
YOU BET YOU WON'T!
WELL, WHAT ARE YOU STANDIN' AROUND FOR, FELLA? GRAB A HARD HAT AN' GET TO WORK!
WITH PLEASURE, MR. GORDON... WITH PLEASURE!

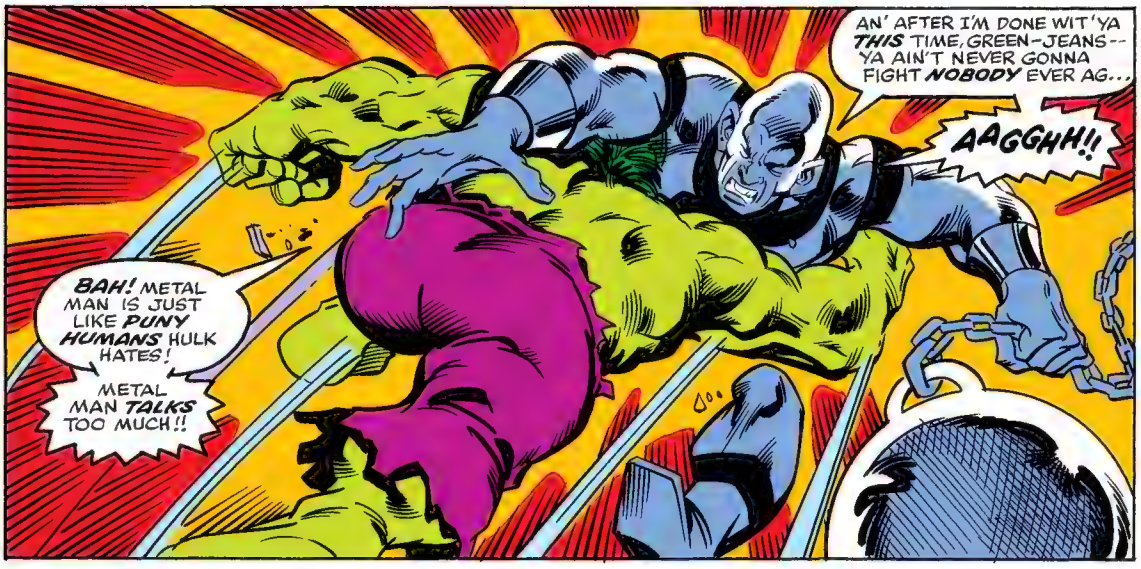
LIKE INDUSTRIOUS ANTS SCURRYING ABOUT SOME OVERSIZED ANTHILL, THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS GO ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS...
IT'S HARD WORK BUT HONEST WORK--
--AND A CERTAIN EX-PHYSICIST LOVES EVERY MINUTE OF IT!
MAN, MY ARMS FEEL LIKE THEY'RE MADE OF LEAD! IT WOULD BE SO EASY FOR THE HULK TO CARRY A THOUSAND TIMES THIS LOAD--
--BUT, GOOD LORD WILLING, I'LL NEVER SEE THE HULK AGAIN!
OF COURSE, THERE ARE OTHERS ON THE SITE WHO AREN'T QUITE AS ENCHANTED WITH THEIR DUTIES...
SHEESH, I'M SO BORED WITH THIS JOB, I'D BE TEMPTED TO GO ON UNEMPLOYMENT...
...IF THAT DIDN'T MEAN HAVING TO STAY HOME WITH THE WIFE ALL DAY!
FRANKLY, FELLA--YOUR LITTLE WOMAN IS THE LEAST OF YOUR PROBLEMS AT THE MOMENT...
UUNNGGHH!!
WOK!
BUT DON'T WORRY; SHE'LL COME TO VISIT YOU EVERY DAY AT THE HOSPITAL!
THEN, EVEN AS THE UNCONSCIOUS MACHINE-OPERATOR TOPPLES OUT OF HIS CAB--
--HIS CRANE STARTS TO GO BERSERK!
A FACT THAT DOES NOT GO LONG UNNOTICED BY THE CREW WORKING HIGH ABOVE THE STREET!
HEY, WHAT'S GOIN' ON WITH BERT? HE'S HANDLIN' THAT RIG OF HIS LIKE HE WAS AS DRUNK AS A STULTIFIED SKUNK!
DRUNK, MY MOTHER'S MOUSTACHE!
THAT LUNATIC HAS FLATOUT GONE BANANAS! H-HE'S SWINGIN' THAT HEAVY IRON I-BEAM RIGHT AT US!
AN' I... I COULD SWEAR TH-THERE IS SOMEBODY RIDIN' IT!?!

NOT JUST SOMEBODY, SUCKER-- THE NAME IS CRUSHER CREEL!
BUT YA CAN ALL CALL ME--THE ABSORBING MAN!
SKRA-DAK!
HOLY SMOKE! IT'S THAT SUPER-VILLAIN FREAK WHO BUSTED OUTTA THE MEN'S DETENTION CENTER YESTERDAY!
I SAW IT ON THE TV-NEWS LAST NIGHT!*
BUT WHAT IN BLAZES DOES HE WANT HERE?
*AND WE ALL SAW IT HERE LAST ISSUE, RIGHT?--LEN.

I WANT HIM! I MEAN, I WANT THE BIG GREEN GORILLA THAT SHARES HIS BODY!
C'MON, CREEP-- CHANGE! TURN INTA THE HULK SO'S I CAN SHOW THE WHOLE BLAMED WORLD WHICH ONE OF US IS BETTER!
Y-YOU'VE MADE SOME MISTAKE! I--I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT!
I'M NOT THE HULK! I DON'T EVEN KNOW ANY HULK!
PLEASE-- LET HIM BELIEVE ME!
PLAYIN' DUMB, HUH?
OKAY, SUCKER-- YA ASKED FER THIS!
IF I CAN'T HAVE THE HULK TA SMASH INTA JELLY--
WELL THEN-- I'LL JUST HAFTA SETTLE FER WHAT-EVER I CAN GET!
LORD, THAT HEAVY BALL-AND-CHAIN OF HIS MISSED ME BY A WHISKER!
WHAT CHANCE DO I STAND AGAINST A MAN WHO'S MADE OF SOLID IRON!?
SPANG!
AN', BUSTER-- THAT MEANS YOU!
C'MON, SUCKER-- DON'T BACK AWAY! YA CAN'T RUN FROM ME FOREVER!
SOONER OR LATER, I'LL CATCH YA-- AND THEN YA'LL TELL ME WHERE TA FIND THE BLASTED HULK OR...
NO-- STAY AWAY FROM ME! STAY BACK OR I'LL...
EH? DIDN'T SEE THE EDGE BEHIND ME--! LOSING MY BALANCE--!
NO!
NOOOOOO
AND AS ROBERT BRUCE BANNER PLUNGES HELPLESS-LY TOWARDS HIS DOOM...

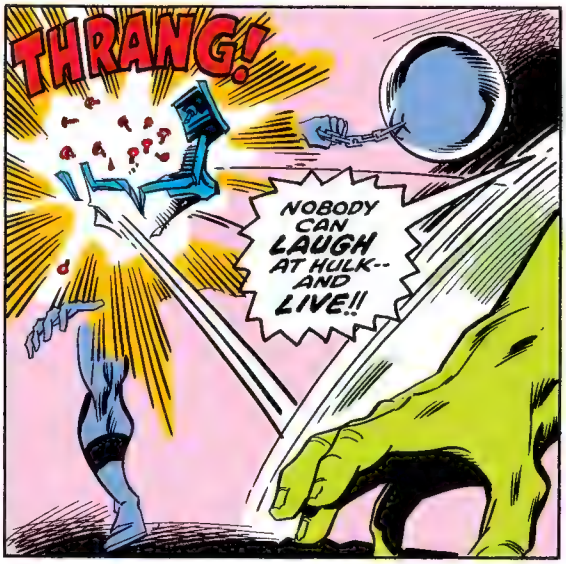

...WHY DON'T WE CHECK OUT WHAT THE REST OF OUR SPARKLING CAST IS DOING OUT AT GAMMA BASE?
WELL, SAMSON--YOU'RE OUR RESIDENT PSYCHIATRIST. WHAT DO YOU THINK?
FRANKLY, GENERAL ROSS... I DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT TO THINK!
ANY MAN WHO'S BEEN OUT IN THE DESERT ALONE FOR AS LONG AS HE WAS SHOULD BE SUFFERING FROM A GOOD DEAL MORE THAN EXPOSURE--
--BUT THAT SEEMS TO BE ALL THAT'S WRONG WITH OUR MYSTERIOUS FRIEND HERE--
"--EXCEPT, OF COURSE, THAT HE HASN'T REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS SINCE HE STAGGERED IN HERE AND COLLAPSED!*
*LAST ISH.--LEN.
"WE'VE HAD SECURITY TEAMS INVESTIGATING THE ENTIRE AREA, BUT THEY HAVEN'T TURNED UP A TRACE OF ANY...
"HEY--HIS EYES ARE OPENING!
"IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S...
"...AWAKE!!"
YAAAAAAAAAA
TAKE IT EASY, FELLA--IT'S OKAY! YOU'RE AMONG FRIENDS HERE!
YOU'RE AMONG FRIENDS!
NO! NO!
BY JUPITER! THE MAN'S HYSTERICAL!
QUARTERMAIN, YOU'D BETTER GET SECURITY IN HERE--ON THE DOUBLE!
HOLD YOUR HORSES, GENERAL. I DON'T THINK WE'LL NEED 'EM!
CLAY IS RIGHT! HE'S CALMING DOWN NOW!
WH-WHAT HAPPENED TO ME?
THAT'S WHAT WE'D LIKE TO KNOW! YOU CAME WANDERING IN HERE OUT OF THE DESERT! WHERE ARE YOU FROM? WHO ARE YOU?
WHY, I'M... I'M...
SWEET LORD, I... I DON'T KNOW!

FORTUNATELY, WHILE WE WERE OCCUPIED ELSEWHERE, ROBERT BRUCE BANNER HAS NOT YET HIT THE GROUND SO FAR BELOW HIM--
--BUT THE OVERWHELMING PANIC INDUCED BY HIS PLUNGE HAS STARTED HIS HEART POUNDING, HIS PULSE RACING--
--THUS ONCE MORE TRIGGERING THE MOST REMARKABLE TRANSFORMATION EVER RECORDED IN THE ANNALS OF ADVENTUREDOM--
--BUT HAS THAT MOST AMAZING METAMORPHOSIS COME IN TIME?
KWA-WHUMP!
MERCIFUL MOTHER! THAT POOR GUY IS FINISHED!
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
BAH! METAL MAN KNOCKED HULK OFF ROOF-- TRIED TO KILL HULK--
--BUT METAL MAN FAILED!!
WELL, WHADDAYA KNOW? "THEY" WUZ RIGHT ALL ALONG!
THAT SKINNY TWERP REALLY WUZ THE HULK!
YOU! HULK KNOWS YOU, METAL MAN!
HULK HAS FOUGHT YOU BEFORE!*
*WAY BACK IN HULK #125. --LEN.

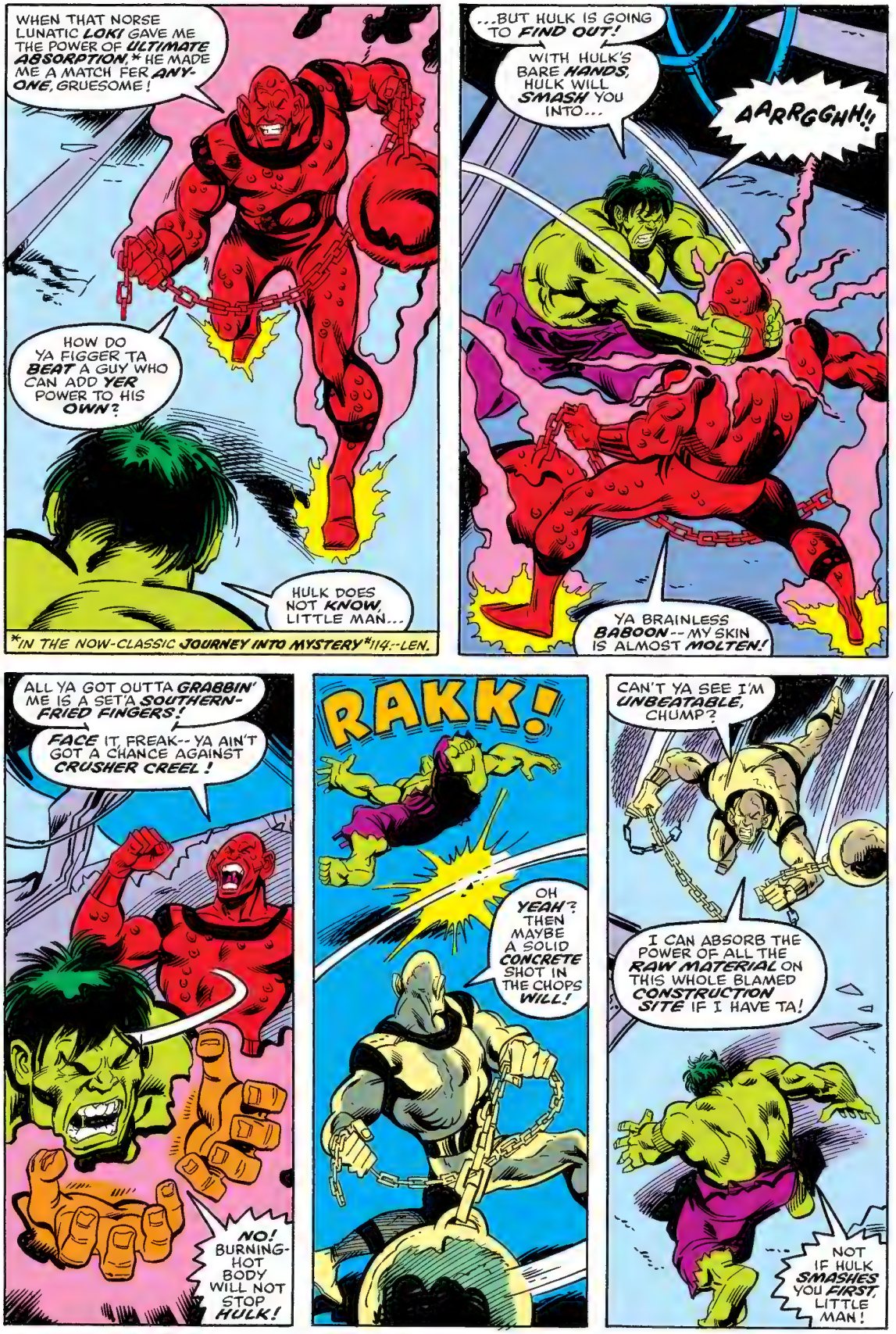

AN' AFTER I'M DONE WIT'YA THIS TIME, GREEN-JEANS-- YA AIN'T NEVER GONNA FIGHT NOBODY EVER AG...
AAGGHH!!
BAH! METAL MAN IS JUST LIKE PUNY HUMANS HULK HATES!
METAL MAN TALKS TOO MUCH!!

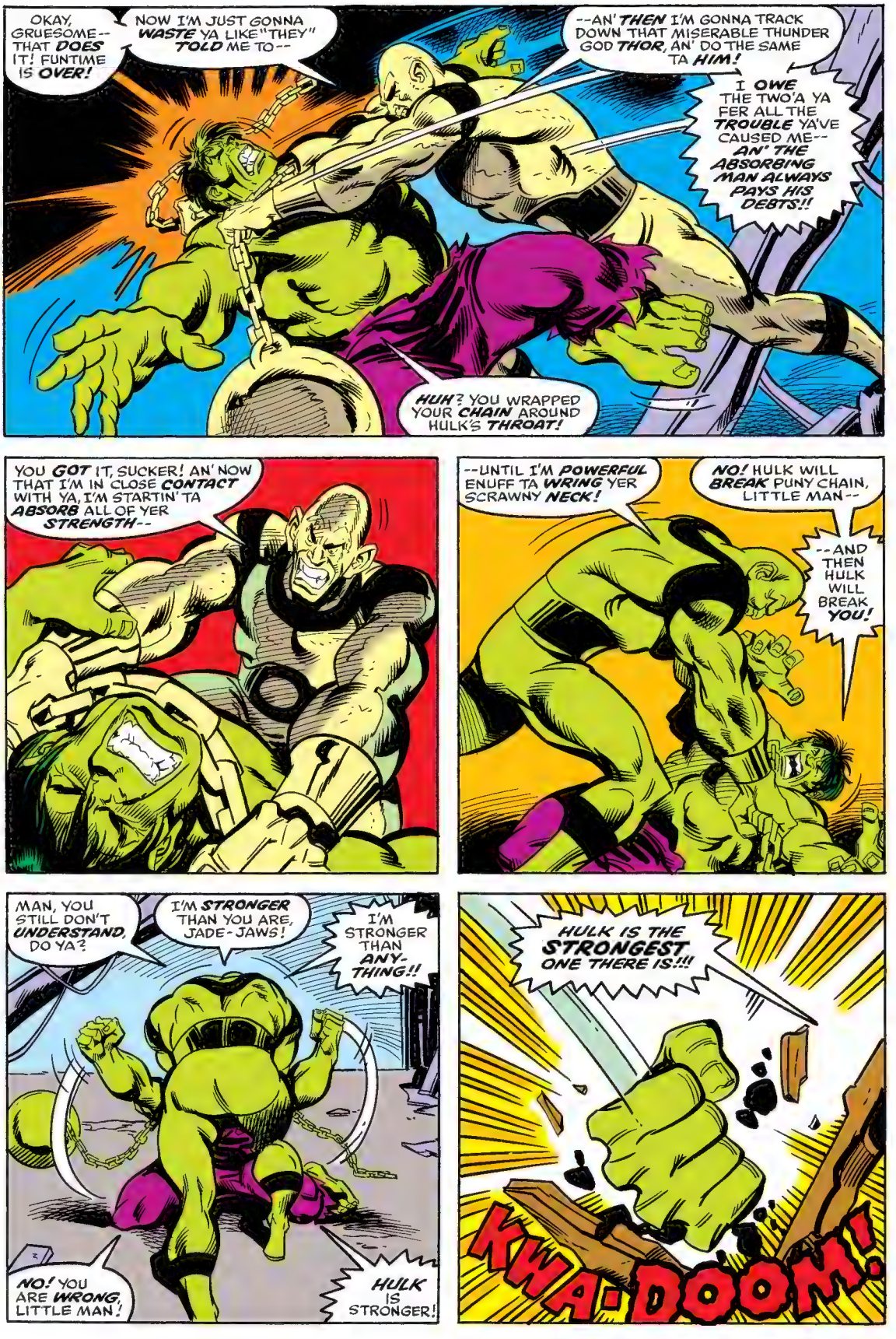
YEAH, JADE-JAWS-- YER RIGHT! IT'S TIME FER A LITTLE LESS TALK--
SPLOOW!
--AN' A WHOLE LOT MORE ACTION!!

Y'KNOW, GRUESOME--YOU AIN'T HALF AS TOUGH AS I REMEMBER YA!
TAKIN' YOU APART IS GONNA BE LIKE PICKIN' PETALS OFF A DAISY!
GO AHEAD AND JOKE, METAL MAN-- BUT YOU WILL NOT LAUGH AT HULK MUCH LONGER!

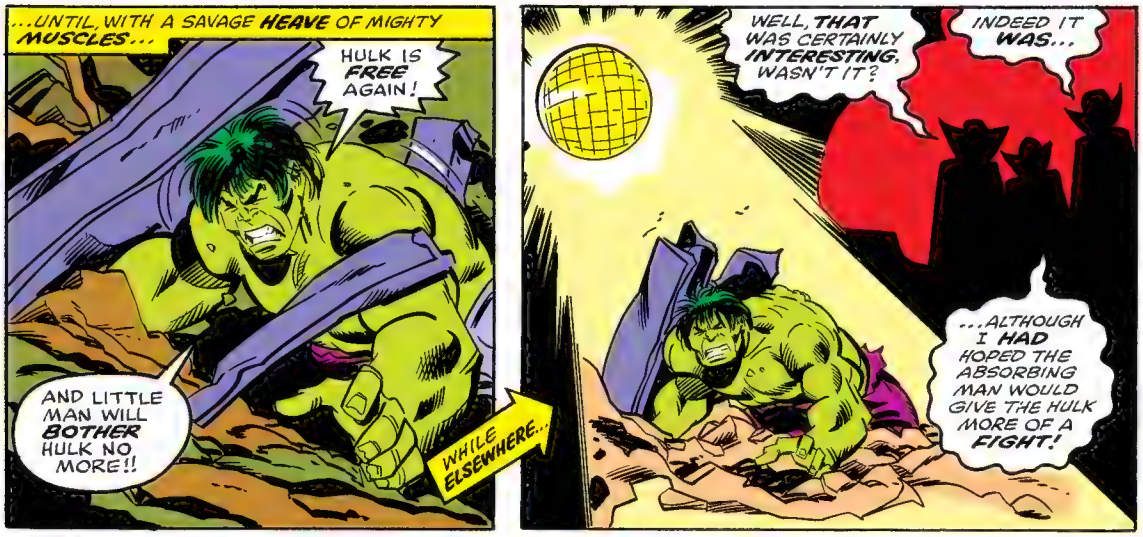

THRANG!
NOBODY CAN LAUGH AT HULK-- AND LIVE!!

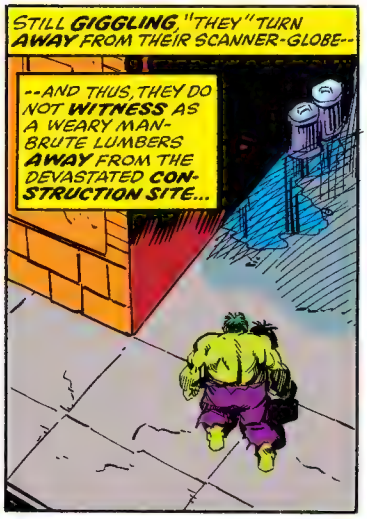
YOU HAVEN'T LEARNED SINCE LAST TIME--HAVE YA, JADE-JAWS?
WHAT GOOD DOES TOSSIN' A MESS'A RED-HOT RIVETS AT ME DO YA--
--WHEN I CAN ABSORB THAT POWER TOO!


WHEN THAT NORSE LUNATIC LOKI GAVE ME THE POWER OF ULTIMATE ABSORPTION,* HE MADE ME A MATCH FER ANY-ONE, GRUESOME!
HOW DO YA FIGGER TA BEAT A GUY WHO CAN ADD YER POWER TO HIS OWN?
HULK DOES NOT KNOW, LITTLE MAN...
*IN THE NOW-CLASSIC JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #114.--LEN.
...BUT HULK IS GOING TO FIND OUT!
WITH HULK'S BARE HANDS, HULK WILL SMASH YOU INTO...
AARRGGHH!!
YA BRAINLESS BABOON-- MY SKIN IS ALMOST MOLTEN!
ALL YA GOT OUTTA GRABBIN' ME IS A SET'A SOUTHERN-FRIED FINGERS!
FACE IT, FREAK-- YA AIN'T GOT A CHANCE AGAINST CRUSHER CREEL!
NO! BURNING-HOT BODY WILL NOT STOP HULK!
RAKK!
OH YEAH? THEN MAYBE A SOLID CONCRETE SHOT IN THE CHOPS WILL!
CAN'T YA SEE I'M UNBEATABLE, CHUMP?
I CAN ABSORB THE POWER OF ALL THE RAW MATERIAL ON THIS WHOLE BLAMED CONSTRUCTION SITE IF I HAVE TA!
NOT IF HULK SMASHES YOU FIRST, LITTLE MAN!

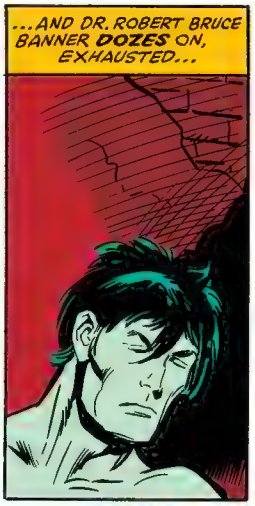

OKAY, GRUESOME-- THAT DOES IT! FUNTIME IS OVER!
NOW I'M JUST GONNA WASTE YA LIKE "THEY" TOLD ME TO--
--AN' THEN I'M GONNA TRACK DOWN THAT MISERABLE THUNDER GOD THOR, AN' DO THE SAME TA HIM!
I OWE THE TWO'A YA FER ALL THE TROUBLE YA'VE CAUSED ME-- AN' THE ABSORBING MAN ALWAYS PAYS HIS DEBTS!!
HUH? YOU WRAPPED YOUR CHAIN AROUND HULK'S THROAT!
YOU GOT IT, SUCKER! AN' NOW THAT I'M IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH YA, I'M STARTIN' TA ABSORB ALL OF YER STRENGTH--
--UNTIL I'M POWERFUL ENUFF TA WRING YER SCRAWNY NECK!
NO! HULK WILL BREAK PUNY CHAIN, LITTLE MAN--
--AND THEN HULK WILL BREAK YOU!
MAN, YOU STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND, DO YA?
I'M STRONGER THAN YOU ARE, JADE-JAWS!
I'M STRONGER THAN ANY-THING!!
NO! YOU ARE WRONG, LITTLE MAN!
HULK IS STRONGER!
HULK IS THE STRONGEST ONE THERE IS!!!
KWA-DOOM!

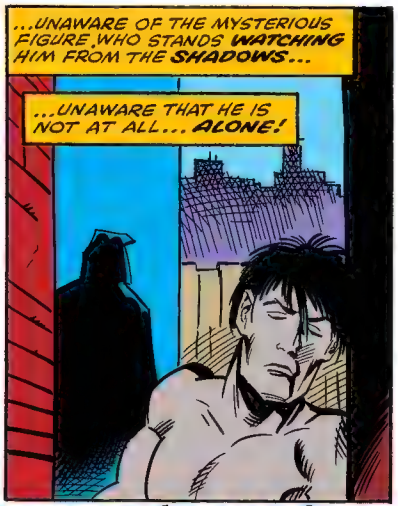
LIKE TWO GREAT GREEN PILE-DRIVERS, THE MAN-BRUTE'S FLAILING FISTS BATTER THE FLOOR BENEATH HIM AGAIN AND AGAIN IN FRUSTRATED RAGE--
...UNTIL THE ALL-BUT-DESERTED SKYSCRAPER SHUDDERS... HEAVES...
...AND, AT LAST, GIVES WAY!
HAH! HULK SHOWED YOU WHO WAS STRONGER, LITTLE MAN!
DON'T START PATTIN' YERSELF ON THE BACK, GRUESOME! YA AIN'T WON YET!
ALL I HAVE TA DO TA PROTECT MYSELF FROM THIS FALL IS...
...ABSORB THE POWER OF THE FIRST THING I CAN GRAB HOLD OF...
...AND TURN MYSELF INTA...
...GLASS?
CRUSHER CREEL'S HORRIFIED SCREAM ENDS WITH SICKENING SUDDENNESS UPON THE ROCKS THAT WAIT BELOW HIM--
SPLINKT!
--BUT THE TRIUMPHANT HULK DOES NOT HAVE LONG TO GLOAT--
--AS HE STRIKES THE GROUND AN INSTANT AFTER--AND IS IMMEDIATELY BURIED BENEATH COUNTLESS TONS OF TWISTED STEEL AND CONCRETE!
AARRGGHH!!
IT TAKES SEVERAL MINUTES FOR THE RUBBLE TO FINALLY SETTLE--
--SEVERAL INTERMINABLE MINUTES WHERE NOTHING MOVES, SAVE FOR SOME SHIFTING PIECE OF METAL OR SOME SIFTING GRAIN OF DUST...


...UNTIL, WITH A SAVAGE HEAVE OF MIGHTY MUSCLES...
HULK IS FREE AGAIN!
AND LITTLE MAN WILL BOTHER HULK NO MORE!!
WHILE ELSEWHERE...
WELL, THAT WAS CERTAINLY INTERESTING, WASN'T IT?
INDEED IT WAS...
...ALTHOUGH I HAD HOPED THE ABSORBING MAN WOULD GIVE THE HULK MORE OF A FIGHT!


STILL GIGGLING, "THEY" TURN AWAY FROM THEIR SCANNER-GLOBE--
--AND THUS, THEY DO NOT WITNESS AS A WEARY MAN-BRUTE LUMBERS AWAY FROM THE DEVASTATED CONSTRUCTION SITE...

...AND SEEKS TEMPORARY SHELTER IN A DESERTED ALLEYWAY!
WITH A HEAVY SIGH, THE GREEN GOLIATH SETTLES DOWN AND DRIFTS OFF INTO A FITFUL SLEEP...



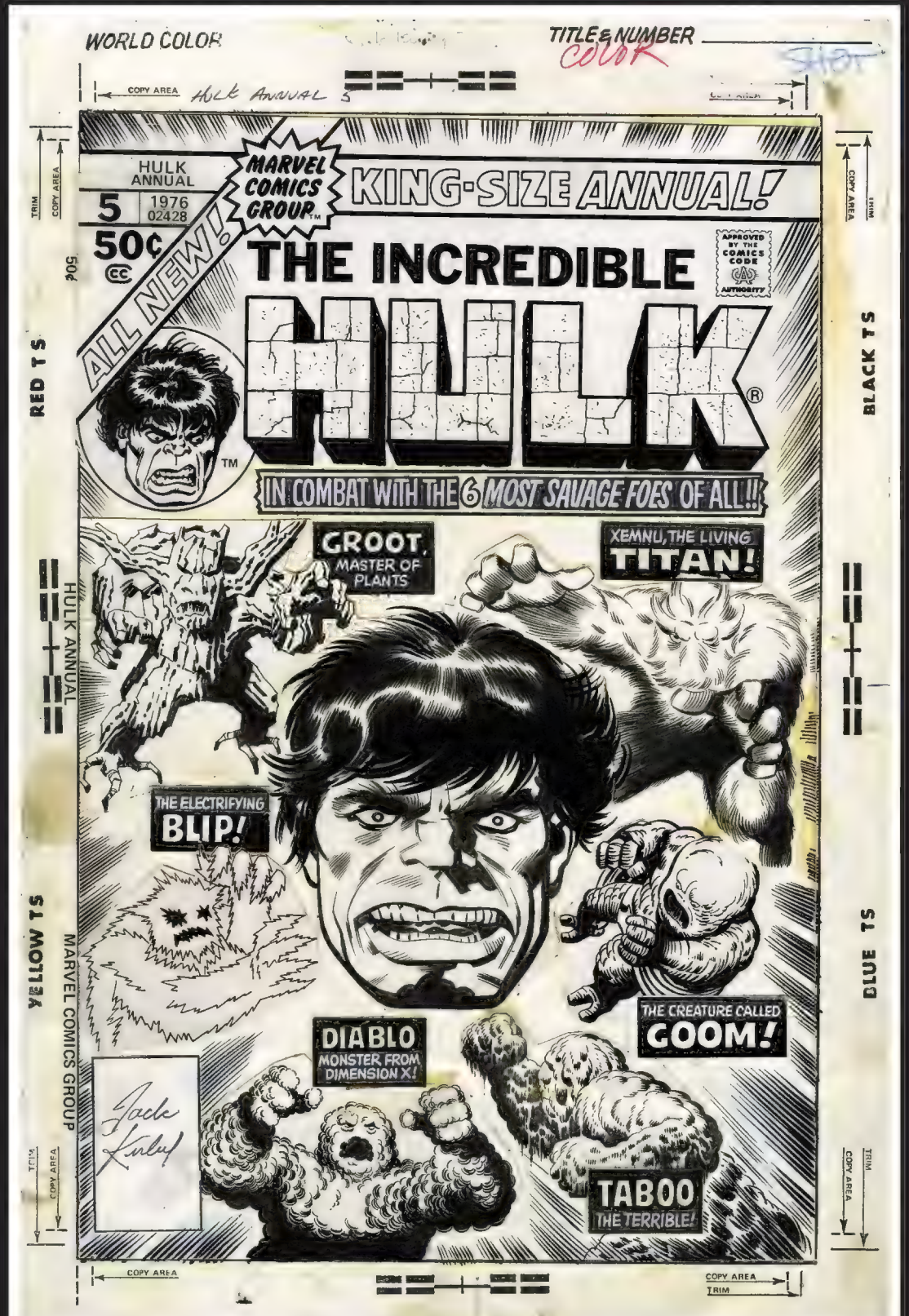


NEXT ISSUE:

EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE MAN-BRUTE-- SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH THE MASTER OF THE UNKNOWN AGAINST A MENACE AS OLD AS TIME! BE HERE FOR...

"AND CALL THE DOCTOR... DRUID!"

The Incredible Hulk Annual #5 cover original art
by Jack Kirby & Frank Giacoia with John Verpoorten, Jack Abel & John Romita



Courtesy HeritageAuctions.com

The Incredible Hulk #208 unused cover
by Dave Cockrum

Courtesy Ted Latner

BIOGRAPHIES

LEN WEIN

Len Wein's career is highlighted by successes from Swamp Thing to the "All-New, All-Different" X-Men, but few fans know that the award-winning writer and editor started out as a comic-book artist.

As a teenager, Wein was tied to the hip with fellow fanzine writer Marv Wolfman, regularly skipping school to tour the DC Comics offices. After building a rapport with artists and execs like Dick Giordano, Carmine Infantino and Joe Orlando, Wein was able to credibly pitch to the editors. Though his artwork was politely passed upon, a script for *House of Mystery* was accepted and a career as a writer was born. Len attacked his new occupation with gusto, writing for DC, Marvel, Gold Key and Skywald, on everything from Western to horror, and licensed properties from Hot Wheels to Star Trek.

Although his desired career as an artist didn't quite pan out, it did give Wein insight into his collaborator's creative process and helped him garner acclaim as a writer that was "easy to draw." After super-hero work in the early '70s (Daredevil, Superman, Flash), he and artist Bernie Wrightson launched horror mainstay Swamp Thing in the pages of *House of Secrets* #92. Other notable achievements from his tenure at DC include a run on *Justice League of America* and the debut of the Human Target.

Hopping over to Marvel in 1974, where he followed Roy Thomas as editor in chief, Wein scripted several series, including *Incredible Hulk*, where he and artist Herb Trimpe introduced one of comics' most famous characters—Wolverine. That wasn't the end of his mutant milestones, as with artist Dave Cockrum he revived the dormant X-Men property with a new international cast. Its cadre of characters, including Storm, Nightcrawler and Colossus would shortly turn into comics' biggest phenomenon.

Returning to DC, Wein helped spur a creative revival at the company, editing *New Teen Titans*, *Camelot 3000* and *Swamp Thing*, which gave writer Alan Moore his American debut; shortly thereafter, Wein would preside over Moore and Dave Gibbon's groundbreaking *Watchmen*. Since then, Wein's credits in comics, animation and television writing have been numerous and well received. He was inducted into the Eisner Hall of Fame in 2008 and passed away in 2017, leaving behind a creative legacy celebrated worldwide.

SAL BUSCEMA

Without a doubt one of comics' most prolific artists, "Our Pal" Sal Buscema joined Marvel in 1968 shortly after his elder brother, John. Tackling inking duties on *Silver Surfer* and *Fantastic Four*, including the all-time classic *Silver Surfer* #4, Buscema quickly graduated to penciling. He was an anchor of the Marvel line in the 1970s with long runs on books like *Captain America*, *Marvel Team-Up* and *The Spectacular Spider-Man* and a 100-plus issue run on *The Incredible Hulk*. Buscema was also behind defining the tone on early issues of *The Defenders*, *Rom* and *The New Mutants*. His career as one of Marvel's most versatile artists lasted throughout the '70s and into the '90s. In 1988, he returned to *The Spectacular Spider-Man* and over the next ten years penciled every issue but two from #134 through #238 (and inked the vast majority as well!) Although he retired in the late '90s, readers can still see his name on comics credits from time to time, including inking work on the cult hit *Spider-Girl*.

CHRIS CLAREMONT

It is hard to remember a time when the word "mutant" didn't correspond with the largest and most ardently followed franchise in comics, but in the mid-'70s the X-Men were naught but a forgotten team of misfits. Chris Claremont and his collaborators took this moribund property and issue by issue transformed it into a phenomenon now known the world over.

Claremont began his career in comics in the early '70s pitching in on issues of *Avengers*, *Daredevil* and *Incredible Hulk*, while also delivering several text stories to Marvel's black-and-white magazines. His first regular writing gig was *War Is Hell*, a "weird war" title that came to a close just as his run on *X-Men* and *Iron Fist* began. *Iron Fist*, which rolled out of the pages of *Marvel Premiere*, was done in concert with artist John Byrne, forming a key partnership that would pay big dividends later. Other high-profile projects from Claremont's first full decade in comics included *Marvel Preview*'s Starlord, *Ms. Marvel*, *Marvel Team-Up* (again with Byrne) and *John Carter: Warlord of Mars*.

But it was in the pages of *X-Men* where Claremont would change comics history. In tandem with artists Dave Cockrum and John Byrne, Claremont helped build a cornerstone franchise for Marvel. After writer Len Wein launched the newly updated series in 1975 with *Giant-Size X-Men* #1, Claremont was tasked with guiding the new adventures of the mutant misfits, and he did so by crafting layered stories that balanced crisp dialogue with high-octane action. Claremont placed a premium on characterization, a lofty goal in a team book with many players, but he did so deftly enough to spin a wide-ranging tapestry of characters, each of whom became fan favorites.

Leading breathless fans down the path of classics including "The Dark Phoenix Saga," "Days of Future Past," and *God Loves, Man Kills*, he helped build such an intense loyalty that it only

made sense to spin-off the X-Men's success into new books. The first such spin-off was *The New Mutants*. Later in the decade, Claremont launched *Excalibur* with Alan Davis and established a regular series for Wolverine with John Buscema.

In 1990, he launched a new sister title for the main team of mutants with Jim Lee; *X-Men* #1 premiered to numbers that made it the highest-selling comic ever. After a long break from the company, Claremont returned to Marvel in 2000, and over the next ten years wrote the novelization of Bryan Singer's X-Men film, took on the Fantastic Four, and charted the adventures of Marvel's mutants across a variety of titles. He was inducted into the Eisner Hall of Fame with its 2015 class.

HERB TRIMPE

He may not have dreamed up as many characters as Kirby or Ditko, or had as groundbreaking a style as Steranko or Adams—and he'll be the first one to tell you that! But Herb Trimpe is easily one of the most recognizable comic artists of all time, owing to the incredible popularity of two titles (*Incredible Hulk*, *G.I. Joe*) he made successes.

Herb joined Marvel's production department fresh out of the armed forces, where he served in the Air Force as a weatherman from 1962-1966, providing weather telemetry to forces in Vietnam. In between his office duties, he landed fill-in work as a penciler and inker on books like *Kid Colt, Outlaw* and *Marvel Super-Heroes* #16, featuring the Phantom Eagle, a collaboration with writer Gary Friedrich that played off Herb's well-known interest in drawing airplanes.

He also inked several books, most notably over Marie Severin's Hulk in *Tales to Astonish*. Several months later, Herb got the book as his own, and from 1968 to 1975, the Hulk's tales were drawn under his auspices. He combined an E.C.-influenced approach to layouts with Kirby-esque dynamics, a style that became even more pronounced when he began inking his own pencils with issue #117. Through it all, he never strayed from the elements of the character he felt had already been perfected: the pathos of a tragic figure's Jekyll/Hyde dual personality. During his tenure, he came up with the Hulkbusters, did character designs for the likes of Wendigo and Zzzax, and also drew the first appearance of Wolverine in *Incredible Hulk* #180-182.

After the Hulk, Trimpe drew *Godzilla*, *Shogun Warriors* and *The Defenders*. He also drew the first several issues of Marvel UK's *Captain Britain*. As the 1980s began, Trimpe drew a much-beloved run on *Marvel Team-Up*, but it was the launch of *G.I. Joe* that would make Trimpe's some of the most seen comic art of the decade. An instant hit, selling hundreds of thousands of copies over multiple printings, it was the start of an incredibly successful, long-running title. In addition to the early *G.I. Joe* issues, Trimpe drew its spinoff title, *G.I. Joe Special Missions*.

Another highlight in Trimpe's career was providing breakdown art in collaboration with Barry Windsor-Smith on the *Machine Man* limited series. Later in the decade, his workload scaled back to spot penciling and inking jobs. In 2002, he was awarded the Humanitarian of the Year Award at the San Diego Comic-Con for services rendered as a chaplain at Ground Zero after 9/11. In his retirement, he continued to delight fans with the occasional cover or short story. Trimpe passed away in 2015, leaving a legacy as one of Marvel's most accomplished storytellers.

Biographies researched and written by John Rhett Thomas

THE MARVEL MASTERWORKS

THE MARVEL MASTERWORKS LIBRARY PRESENTS THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC BOOKS, PAINSTAKINGLY RESTORED FROM THE HIGHEST-QUALITY SOURCES AND WITH THE MOST DILIGENT ARCHIVAL METHODS.

THE GOLDEN AGE

As the Great Depression wore on and the specter of war hung over America, a new storytelling medium was born: the comic book. Within their four-color pages, larger-than-life super heroes could make short work of America's foes, giving readers of all ages hope for victory against the real-life enemies that faced the United States. At the forefront of this new medium was Timely Comics, a young company staffed by such legendary creators as Carl Burgos, Bill Everett, Joe Simon, Jack Kirby and Stan Lee. These trailblazing talents birthed a vast array of characters that would give rise to the Marvel Universe!

GOLDEN AGE ALL-WINNERS VOLS. 1-4
GOLDEN AGE CAPTAIN AMERICA VOLS. 1-6
GOLDEN AGE DARING MYSTERY VOLS. 1-2
GOLDEN AGE HUMAN TORCH VOLS. 1-3
GOLDEN AGE MARVEL COMICS VOLS. 1-7
GOLDEN AGE MYSTIC COMICS VOL. 1
GOLDEN AGE SUB-MARINER VOLS. 1-3
GOLDEN AGE U.S.A. COMICS VOLS. 1-2
GOLDEN AGE YOUNG ALLIES VOLS. 1-2

THE ATLAS ERA

Seeing super heroes waning, Timely Comics evolved into Atlas Comics and took on a vast new range of genres: science-fiction tales of outer space adventures; realistic war comics; buxom jungle heroines; horror comics that would become the center of a moral panic that rocked the industry; and romance comics for the emerging teen audience. Even the classic costumed heroes of the Golden Age retooled to take on the threat of Communism. From Western gunfighters to crime to horror, the Atlas Era had it all!

ATLAS ERA BATTLEFIELD VOL. 1
ATLAS ERA BLACK KNIGHT/YELLOW CLAW VOL. 1
ATLAS ERA HEROES VOLS. 1-3
ATLAS ERA JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY VOLS. 1-4
ATLAS ERA JUNGLE ADVENTURE VOLS. 1-3
ATLAS ERA MENACE VOL. 1
ATLAS ERA STRANGE TALES VOLS. 1-6
ATLAS ERA TALES TO ASTONISH VOLS. 1-4
ATLAS ERA TALES OF SUSPENSE VOLS. 1-4
ATLAS ERA VENUS VOL. 1

THE MARVEL AGE

In August 1961, change hit newsstands: *The Fantastic Four* #1 did not feature the squeaky-clean heroes of yesteryear. They were real characters placed in extraordinary circumstances. They lived together, they fought among themselves — and sometimes, they even lost to the bad guys. This was more than a change in attitude: It was the beginning of something entirely different — the beginning of the Marvel Age of Comics!

Thanks to the fertile imaginations of Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko and others, an unending list of heroes followed the FF with ever-increasing acclaim and popularity: the Amazing Spider-Man, the Mighty Thor, the Incredible Hulk, Daredevil, Iron Man and the X-Men, to name but a few. These were the Marvel heroes, born of conflict and a continuous struggle to balance human lives with superhuman responsibilities.

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN VOLS. 1-19
ANT-MAN/GIANT-MAN VOLS. 1-3
THE AVENGERS VOLS. 1-18
THE BLACK PANTHER VOLS. 1-2
CAPTAIN AMERICA VOLS. 1-10
CAPTAIN MARVEL VOLS. 1-6
THE CHAMPIONS VOL. 1
DAREDEVIL VOLS. 1-12
DEATHLOK VOL. 1
THE DEFENDERS VOLS. 1-6
DOCTOR STRANGE VOLS. 1-8
THE FANTASTIC FOUR VOLS. 1-19
THE HUMAN TORCH VOLS. 1-2
THE INCREDIBLE HULK VOLS. 1-12
THE INHUMANS VOLS. 1-2
THE INVINCIBLE IRON MAN VOLS. 1-10
IRON FIST VOLS. 1-2
KA-ZAR VOLS. 1-2
LUKE CAGE VOLS. 1-2
MARVEL RARITIES VOL. 1
MARVEL TEAM-UP VOLS. 1-3
MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE VOLS. 1-3
THE MIGHTY THOR VOLS. 1-16
MS. MARVEL VOLS. 1-2
NICK FURY, AGENT OF S.H.I.E.L.D. VOLS. 1-3
NOT BRAND ECHH VOL. 1
RAWHIDE KID VOLS. 1-2
THE SAVAGE SHE-HULK VOL. 1
SGT. FURY VOLS. 1-4
THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN VOL. 1
SPIDER-WOMAN VOL. 1
THE SILVER SURFER VOLS. 1-2
THE SUB-MARINER VOLS. 1-8
WARLOCK VOLS. 1-2
THE X-MEN VOLS. 1-8
THE UNCANNY X-MEN VOLS. 1-10

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